NEWS / A8 WORLD / A27 ACROSS / A20

5 GMA execs finally resign

By Christian V. Esguerra

IT AIN'T OVER TILL THE FAT LADY sings.

Five members of President Macapagal-Arroyo's Cabinet have tendered their courtesy resignations to prepare for the May 10 local elections.

Leading the way was Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, who said he filed his resignation on Tuesday, a day after the Supreme Court ruled that appointed officials running in the elections were deemed resigned.

Joining Ermita were Justice Secretary Agnes Devanadera, Presidential Management Staff chief Norma Talosig, Trade and Industry Secretary Peter Favila and Tourism Secretary Ace Durano.

LOOK ON A6

FEU graduate tops physicians licensure exam. For full list of passers go to www.inquirer.net

Dubai seeking 15 more suspects in Hamas hit

GMA stops orders of Marina chief

'Burn all ballots without seals'

By Kristine L. Alave

BURN THE BALLOTS!

The Commission on Elections (Comelec) should destroy the 1.8 million ballots that did not have the National Printing Office (NPO) security markings on them to erase lingering doubts that there is a sinister plan to undermine the May 10 polls, Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr. said yesterday.

BURN A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Friday, February 26, 2010 ★★ Vol. 23 / No. 80

Aquino, Villar rock to People Power politics

By Philip C. Tubeza and Michael Lim Ubac

THE TOP TWO RIVALS IN THE MAY presidential race hosted star-powered gatherings that ostensibly marked the anniversary of Edsa I but were suspiciously political.

One showcased a packed coliseum with yellow confetti, the other drew orange-shirted followers to a mall for a rock concert.

AQUINO A10

Whatever happened to some key Edsa I players?

By Minerva Generalao, Diza Victoria and Lawrence de Guzman, Inquirer Research

4 DAYS OF EDSA I

THE EDSA I PEOPLE POWER REVOLution from Feb. 22 to 25, 1986, started as a coup attempt by the Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM) that turned into an uprising involving all sectors and thousands of Filipinos.

Here's a brief update on some of the less publicized but key military, religious and civilian players of that upheaval that helped restore the freedom of the Filipinos.

★ JOSE ALMONTE

It was Col. Jose Almonte who told Cory Aquino, her brother Jose Cojuangco and Jaime Cardinal Sin that something was going to happen in the third week of February 1986.

In a book he commissioned, Cojuangco said that Almonte told him that he and the RAM officers were about to move and suggested that Aquino should not leave Manila. He offered to provide Aquino with security.

Aquino had called for civil disobedience in a massive rally at Rizal Park after President Ferdinand Marcos was proclaimed the winner of the fraud-marred Feb. 7 snap election by the

WHATEVER A11

GMA: Glory of Edsa gone

On her last People Power rites, she says it's now partisan

By TJ Burgonio

CLAIMING THAT THE "GLOrious Revolution" had deteriorated into partisanship over the years, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday made her final appearance as the nation's leader at ceremonies commemorating the 1986 People Power Revolution.

Ms Arroyo led officials in raising the flag at the People Power Monument on Edsa, which kicked off the day's activities to mark the 24th anniversary of the uprising that ousted the dictator Ferdinand Marcos and installed Corazon "Cory" Aquino as the President.

"The Philippines has come a long way since 1986. We regained our freedom and our national pride, but somewhere along the way we became complacent. People Power gained a partisan meaning that started to divide the nation once more," Ms Arroyo said in her speech.

Yesterday was Ms Arroyo's last appearance at the Edsa I anniversary because her term ends on June 30.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Christopher Carreon of the Edsa People Power Commission, Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Victor Ibrado, Philippine National Police Director General Jesus Versosa and Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Oscar Inocentes joined Ms Arroyo at

EDSA: MIXED ACCL

Metro rail loop finally finished

By TJ Burgonio and Paolo G. Montecillo

IMAGINE TAKING A COMMUTER TRAIN around Metro Manila without having to leave the line except at your final destination.

President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday had that exhilarating experience when she took the media on a train ride from Quezon City through Caloocan and Manila to Pasay City and back.

Ms Arroyo marked the 24th anniversary of the 1986 Edsa People Power Revolution by taking the inaugural ride of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) Line 1 North Extension project from North Avenue, Quezon City, to Monumento, in Caloocan City.

METRO: A11

Querubin backs Loren a day after Mar got Magdalo

By Michael Lim Ubac

WHERE WAS SEN. MAR ROXAS DURing the standoff at Marino headquarters in Fort Bonifacio in Taguig City in 2006?

Detained Col. Ariel Querubin, a non-aligned candidate of the Nacionalista Party (NP), raised this question yesterday as he declared his support for the vice presidential candidacy of Sen. Loren Legarda.

QUERUBIN A12

2 bishops back JC's bid, ignore Church stand

By Leila B. Salaverria and Jerome Aning

DEVIATING FROM THE NONPARTISAN stand of the Catholic Church hierarchy, two bishops have chosen their support behind a presidential candidate.

Lipa Archbishop Ramon Arguelles and Bacolod Bishop Vicente Navarro ignored the fence-sitters in the presidential race and instead backed Olongapo City Councilor JC de los Reyes of the Ang Kapatiran Party (AKP), who has been faring dismally in surveys.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) is not endorsing any candidate or party.

Three dioceses to support De los Reyes has prompted Arguelles and Navarro to resign from the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV), the citizens' arm of the Commission on Elections, according to CBCP News, the hierarchy's official publication.

Navarro quit the PPCRV chairmanship in his diocese over the weekend after he openly endorsed the AKP following a meeting

3 BISHOPS A10

The 'original' Jun Lozada mistaken for real McCoy

By Christian V. Esguerra

BIÑAN, LAGUNA—BEING MISTAKEN FOR whistle-blower Jun Lozada has its pros and cons, according to a senatorial candidate who claims to be the "original."

During a recent election forum held at a private school in Cavite, students were afraid

THE ORIGINAL? A10

Second FRONTPAGE

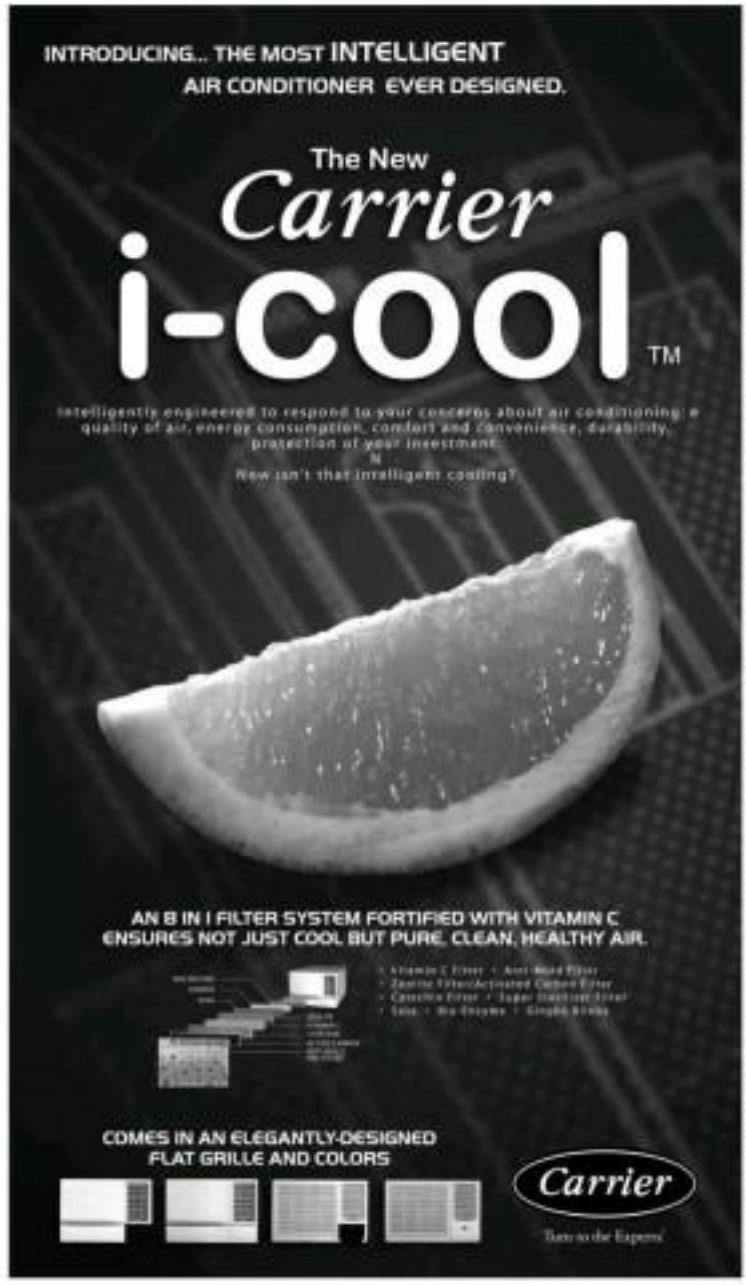
WEATHER FORECAST

Baguio	Partly cloudy	Metro	Partly cloudy
Dagupan city	Partly cloudy	Iloilo	Partly cloudy
Laoag	Partly cloudy	Tacloban	Partly cloudy
Naga	Partly cloudy	Cebu	Partly cloudy
Puerto Princesa	Partly cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly cloudy
Legaspi	Partly cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly cloudy	Davao	Partly cloudy

6/49	22 4 25 10 27 9
SUERTRES	3 2 8 9 6 7 1 4 7
4D	0 0 6 1 4 7
EZ2 LUZ-VIS-MIN	2 4 19 22 30 31
	P3,000,000.00
SUPER LOTTO 6/49	8 15 16 25 37 43
	P42,280,637.20

ORATIO IMPERATA FOR EL NIÑO

Pray for rain, bishops urge



By Lelo B. Salaverria

CHURCH LEADERS IN CEBU and Bohol have decided to seek divine intervention for their drought-stricken flock through a special prayer as the heat continues to intensify and farm lands become more parched due to El Niño.

Tagbilaran Bishop Leonardo Medroso, who is also the chairman of the Episcopal Commission on Social Action, Justice and Peace of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), said the bishops in the Visayas region have agreed to hold a simultaneous prayer rally on Sunday, March 6.

Medroso said the bishops in the Visayas region have agreed to hold a simultaneous prayer rally on Sunday, March 6

If elected, Bro. Eddie to head Defense

By Jovaire Aning

MANSON FILIPINO MOVEMENT standard-bearer Bro. Eddie Villanueva yesterday said he would assume the defense portfolio if he wins the presidency in this year's election.

"I intend to overhaul the Department of National Defense. I will put those who are ill and remove the underage and the abusive," he said in a radio interview.

Villanueva said the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos did the same thing during his first term as president. Marcos was vice-secretary defense secretary from Dec. 21, 1965 to Jan. 28, 1967.

Villanueva said he was also open to continuing peace negotiations with communist and right-wing rebels as well as Muslim separatists.

"I will challenge them to submit all their legitimate demands and I guarantee them 101 percent support of my administration.

But if they're stubborn, if they have delusional and capricious demands... But, are unusual, these I'm sorry, but we'll declare war after exhausting all peaceful avenues," he said.

The Army is [illegible] movement founder also said that after succeeding office, he would unconditionally deal with gambling, drug and smuggling lords as part of his programs to rid the country of corruption.

"I will give them 48 hours to stop the evil things they're doing in the country. Repent and change. Otherwise, the full force of the law will be applied," he said.

BDO

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January winners and their branches of account:

Andrea A. Andres - [illegible]
Erlinda A. Ramos - [illegible]
Fred G. Fernando - [illegible]
George T. Dy-Jesus - [illegible]
Jennifer A. Yu - [illegible]
John Markel G. Balagtal - [illegible]
Karen L. Tan - [illegible]
Lucrecencia M. Damasco - [illegible]
Ma. Teresa D. Macalalad - [illegible]
Maria Grace T. Clemente - [illegible]
Maria Estrella F. Manuel - [illegible]
Mark Rafael C. Sandoval - [illegible]
Myrle Gail A. Te Ong - [illegible]
Oliver C. Wong - [illegible]
Ramon A. Prieto - [illegible]
Richard M. Sy - [illegible]
Rod Vergel G. Nanig - [illegible]

Other winners are from: [illegible]

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WOOING SOLID NORTH

I'm a Marcos loyalist, Erap tells Ilocanos

By Norman Bordadora

LAOAG, ILOCOS Norte—Deposed President Joseph Estrada said he was one of the last loyal leaders of the dictator President Marcos who was ousted by the first People Power Revolution 34 years ago.

Estrada made the remark when he was asked if he thought he still had a good chance of winning in Marcos country considering that the dictator's son, Ferdinand Marcos Jr., is running for senator and/or presidential candidate Sen. Manuel Villar's Nacionalista Party.

"Because I know that I am one of the loyalists of President Marcos. I was one of the last who left Malacañang on 1986," said Estrada who is here for a series of outings in the Ilocos region.

Honolulu visit

Estrada said he rejected the advice of his fellow senators in the first post-Marcos Congress to cancel his plan to visit Marcos in his Honolulu exile where the latter died.

"When [Marcos] consulted returned to the country, I was one of those who joined the welcome. I believe Ilocanos know I'm a true friend," said Estrada who was convicted of plunder in 2007 and sentenced to 40 years in prison but was immediately pardoned by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Estrada was the mayor of San Juan when the first Edsa Bail ousted Marcos accepted Lito other local government officials, he was replaced by an officer-in-charge by President Cory Aquino.

Exile in Ilocos

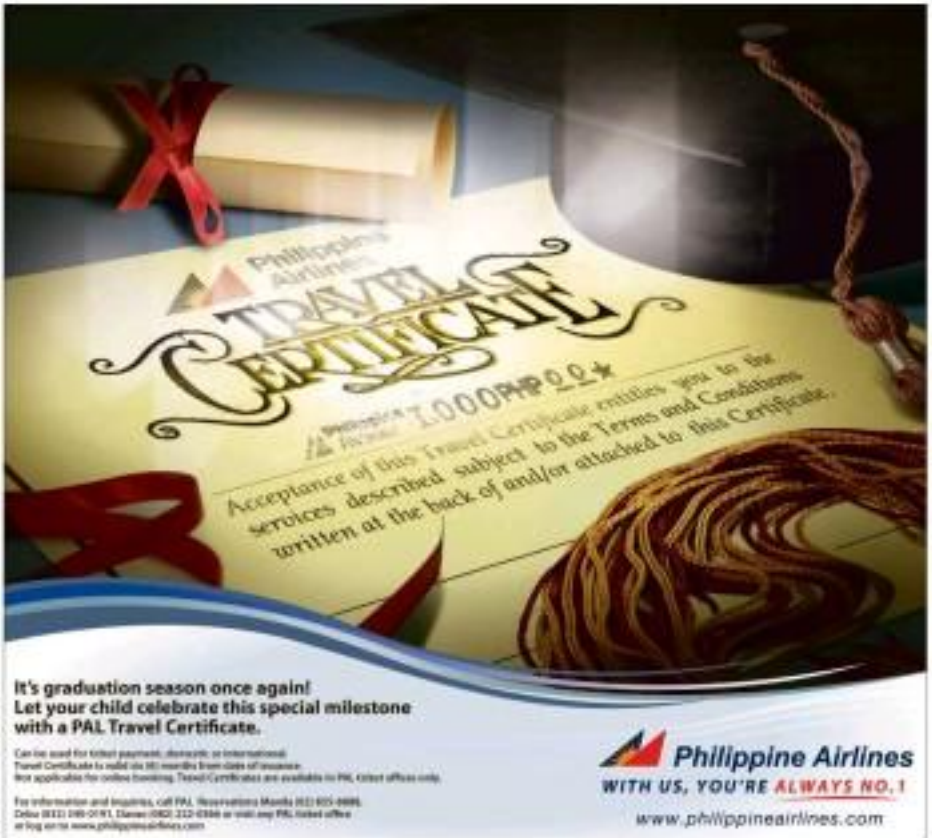
In the midst of the commemoration of the Edsa uprising, Bongbong Marcos—the youngest son of the late strongman will embark on a tour of provinces in Ilocos Norte, including Batac, President Juan Ponce Enrile, Marcos' defense minister and one of the leaders of Edsa I.

Enrile is running for re-election under Estrada's Partido ng Masang Pilipino.

Estrada said he was by a landslide in Ilocos Norte in 1998, claiming to have won the presidency with the biggest margin ever for Ilocos' 11th. Jose de Venecia Jr.

He also said he contested the all-out war that Ilocos had waged against Estrada, which he also claimed to have "liberated."

ERRATUM



Noynoy: Prove Luisita land overprice and I'll quit Senate

By Philip C. Tubeza

LIBERAL PARTY PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III vowed to resign from the Senate if it could be proved he used his influence to benefit his family's sugar estate in the construction of the Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEX).

Speaking to business reporters and editors earlier this week, Aquino accused his critics in the SCTEX controversy of "mental dishonesty" and said he would name several who really benefited from the roadway's construction.

Rafael Castro Ong, Grupo Bumalin of the rival Nacionalista Party (NP) claimed the government had bought overpriced land from Hacienda Luisita...which is owned by the Cojuangco side of Aquino's family...for the expressway.

Show me proof

"When you look at the body of everything I'll mentioned said, I don't think he ever accused me of doing anything or failing to do something," Aquino said.

"Show me genuine (proof and) I'll resign as senator," he added.

Aquino is in his first term in the Senate and could return to the chamber if he does not win the presidency.

He said there were people who benefited from engaging in land speculation in the SCTEX project and he would soon come out with documentary evidence to prove it.

"There is an issue in SCTEX and we'll bring about the several more cases. We'll point out the people who really made money with complete documentation," he said.

No overprice

Aquino denied any overprice in the Hacienda Luisita land sale to the government, pointing out the bank had valued the land at P150 per square meter, but the government paid only P100 per.

He said the C-5 controversy that NP presidential candidate Sen. Manuel Villar was embroiled in could not be compared to the SCTEX project.

"I challenge anybody—when did [Gonzalez] ever say that I wrote a letter to (the Bases Conversion Development Authority) asking for (a favor), or put my pork barrel in SCTEX, or that we diverted the road to Luisita?" he said.

Aquino said the expressway was intended to connect the Subic free port and the Clark airport to the industrial zones in Central Luzon.

"The only industrial zone in Tarlac is Luisita," he said.

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HBW 2000 BALLPEN

5 GMA execs finally resign

From page A1

agement staff chief Hemogenes Esperon Jr., Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya and Ed Dermoncon, Malacañang's point person on the talks with Sanson before project.

Tuvera said the grant's lenders of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority Checks had informed him on Wednesday night about he was, was ongoing down.

"We are submitting our resignations. It depends on the final decision of the President," Tuvera told reporters.

But Lim could not clear that Gibson's resignation was coming, she said not until the start of the official campaign period on March 26.

"Legally, it's OK for us to still be there because [the court decision] is not final and executory," said Limcaoco, who is running for a congressional seat in Batangas.

Her position was backed by Sumulo Macalintal. Mr. Arroyo's election lawyer, who cited a 2009 SC court ruling, which said, "A candidate is liable for an election offense only for acts done during the campaign period, not before."

"Government officials shall be deemed resigned only on March 26...the start of their campaign period—and not when they filed their [certificates of candidacy] on Dec. 1, 2009 since, at that time and up to the present, they are not yet considered as candidates," Macalintal said in a statement.

Tuvera said the resignations came one day after Mr. Arroyo reportedly frowned upon the presence in a meeting of Cabinet officials who for unusual by the court as considered resigned since they filed their candidacy papers.

Just guests

"All those who were mentioned in the Supreme Court decision, all of you are not just guests here today," Tourism Secretary Ace Durano quoted Mr. Arroyo as saying in Tuesday's Cabinet meeting.

Durano said his resignation letter would be delivered to the Palace from Baguio City tomorrow.

He assumed the high tribunal for initially ruling that appointed officials were not considered resigned when they filed their candidacies

last year, only to reverse its position recently.

"Now's that? Now, we're considered resigned. Question is, when is the resignation effective? It's not out hich for the Supreme Court to flip-flop," Pimentel told the legislators in a text message.

"I saved time to focus on my campaign. And I've always said that my resignation is my certainty. I don't have any plans to run any-so- late JC," said Dermoncon, who is running in Quezon president's second congressional district.

Replacements

Simplemo to the justice department said that either Solicitor General Alberto Agra or Philippine Ambassador to the World Trade Organization Manuel Teehankee, a former justice undersecretary, could replace Devanadera.

"I can't confirm until the President says it first," Devanadera said.

She said she has not yet resigning up pending votes until the end of the month.

Another presidential appointee expected to resign is Manila International Airport Authority General Manager Alfonso Cusi, who is running for the House seat in the second district of Marikina city/north.

Cusi, who is running for the House seat in the second district of Marikina city/north.

Also tendering resignations are Energy Undersecretary Jesus Azurin Jr., Agriculture Undersecretary Jesse Dimagiba, Trade Undersecretary Adrian Cristobal Jr., Tourism Undersecretary Ricardo Jalad, Public Works Undersecretary Rafael Yabut, Transportation Undersecretary Jose Perpetuo Lotilla, Interior Undersecretary Rico Puno, Labor Undersecretary Danilo Cruz, Social Welfare Undersecretary Celia Yangco, Health Undersecretary Francisco Duque III, Environment Undersecretary Lucia Ponce de Leon, Agriculture Undersecretary Emerson Lantin, Budget Undersecretary Mario Relampagos, Trade Undersecretary Nora Terrado,

CONNECTING WITH THE MASSES

Gibo proves doubters wrong

By Jocelyn R. Uy

AS IF TO PROVE THAT HE CAN connect with the masses, Lakas-Kampi-CMD presidential standard-bearer Gilbert Teodoro ate with his hands when he met with poor Schoolkik in a campaign sortie to Mandaluyong yesterday.

Teodoro sat to a simple meal of fried tilapia, pork and chicken adobo, tomatoes and hard-boiled eggs with members of the Nagkakaisang Samahan ng Maliliit na Mangingisda ng Mandaluyong (Nagmamy), an umbrella organization of fisherfolk from the eight barangays of Mandaluyong.

"That one does not know how to eat with his hands," observed one lucky fan as she joined a reward in which the diamond-educated scion of the prominent Cojuangco family go through an initiation of sorts.

But Teodoro proved the doubters wrong. He proceeded to squeeze the juice of a calamansi on the rice and pork-and-tilapia before digging them into a mound and going at it with all his fingers.

TEODORO

Boodle fight

Teodoro has in the past engaged soldiers in boodle fights—a military style of communal eating in which soldiers literally attack mountains of food arranged on a long table covered with banana leaves, sharing his wine as dishmates accustom.

Talking while peeling off the shell of a hardboiled egg, Teodoro said it might well be true that his infomercials are not reaching the poor. He said occasions like the one he attended yesterday would help get his message across to the D and E classes.

But there were also "other factors," not just the infomercials, that were affecting his popularity, he said. Asked what those could be, he just gave a knowing smile.

Observers have ascribed Teodoro's poor performance in the surveys to his too stiff-the-upper-lip presidential Mosquiapan persona.

Dr. Prudencio Reyes, Lakas-Kampi-CMD vice president Prospero Pichay blamed Teodoro's PMS0-million infomercials for his weak showing, saying the message they were trying to put across was essentially flawed.

The TV commercial shows Teodoro, a trained pilot, switch-ing on the controls of a plane to get ready for takeoff.

Defending his TV ad, Teodoro said he believed that the masses can relate to it, as the airplane could be taken as a symbol of progress.

He recalled how as a defense secretary flying in almost every corner of the country, he would see people from poor villages get very excited whenever airplanes would hover above them.

"They shout 'Lipad tayo! Lipad tayo!' (Let's fly, let's fly)," he said.

But he said he would take Pichay's suggestion with "due consideration."

"At the end of the day it's really about searching hand to get my ratings up," Teodoro said.

Promising paradise

Teodoro decried candidates' penchant for promising the voters "paradise."

He said the dangers of banking on politicians' "promise of a paradise" was that it breeds false expectations, cynicism and, eventually, indifference among Filipinos.

He said it would be more productive if politicians would teach Filipinos the limitations of government and inhibit citizens' involvement must begin.

"Let us relocate our country-men who are fed these kinds of information that there are only things that the government can provide and things that the people must seek for themselves," Teodoro said in an address to more than 500 students at the University of Perpetual Help in Las Piñas ballpark of the Nazionalista Party's Sen. Manuel Villar.

"I cannot promise an end to poverty, just the road to recovery," he said, explaining to inexperienced voters that what he did was to introduce the idea of "partnership" with government.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, February 26, 2010
1st Week of Lent

1st Reading: Isa 55:10-11
Gospel: Mt 6:19-20

Jesus said to his disciples, "And even, then, that if you are not righteous in a much broader way than the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.

"You have heard that it was said to our people in the past: Do not commit murder; anyone who does kill will have to face trial. But now I tell you: whoever gets angry with a brother or sister will have to face trial. Whoever insults a brother or sister will be brought before the council, and whoever curses a brother or sister will be thrown into the fire of hell. So, if you are about to offer your gift at the altar and you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar, go and make peace with him, and then come and offer your gift to God.

"Come to terms with your opponent quickly while you are together on the way to court. Otherwise he will turn you over to the judge, who will hand you over to the police, who will put you in jail. Then you will stay until you have paid the last penny."

Communion Reflection

"If you are offering your gift at the altar and there you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar, go and make peace with your brother or sister and then come and offer your gift to God."

In his is not to only God
we must first be reconcile
with one another
We must on the other, too,
do the kind of love
in their actions,
care for their sons as well as our own.

Christian Communication Foundation, Inc. / Philippine Bible Society / Philippine Bible Society / Philippine Bible Society

2 bishops ignore Church stand, back JC for president

Pormugao 8]

with visiting candidates led by vice presidential candidate Dominador Chipeco.

Arguelles said he had informed the PPCRV of his decision to leave the group. He has reminded to stipulate a copy of his text message to PPCRV chairman Henrikito de Villa.

"May 11 follow Bishop Reyes: (sic) move to resign from the PPCRV because of my open line and support for Ang Kapatiran Party. Thanks. I am sure you understand. I continue to encourage our local PPCRV volunteers to strive for honest, peaceful and credible elections," Arguelles said in his text message.

Clear platform

Interviewed by CBCP News, Arguelles said he chose to support De los Reyes and AKP candidates despite not yet knowing who had gotten out their list would not win in the local elections.

"They are the only ones I see who have sincerely set forward and with a clear platform of government," he said.

The AKP is fielding about 50 national and local candidates in the May 10 elections. In 2007, when the party first participated in elections, only De los Reyes won of the 20 candidates it fielded.

The party's vice president, Sirad Lim, said one of its eight senatorial candidates, former Ophir cabal Hector Villanueva, is an evangelical Protestant.

Arguelles said he would stand by his decision even if the Church line is only had chosen to be competitors.

"My reality here in the countryside is more and we know about what is happening in our country. I will stand by my position," he said.

Arguelles was one of the cardinals who celebrated Mass at Sto. Cristo Church that De los Reyes attended before filing his certificate of candidacy.

Cardinal Rosales

Arguelles, Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales and Novaliches Bishop Antonio Tobias celebrated the Mass on the request of Mindy Pacheco, founder of Ang Kapatiran Party, and its president Eric Hosaleng.

Hosaleng earlier denied that the parishes' celebration of the Mass was tantamount to an endorsement.

Reyes also told CBCP News that he was supporting AKP candidates because he wanted to be consistent with his advocacy of good governance and the elimination of graft and corruption.

He said he believed that Ang Kapatiran members were also new in their desire to bring about political change.

"They are the only ones who stood up for the principles espoused by the Church," Reyes added.

Conscience

Reyes's also said his conscience told him that what he was doing was the correct thing. "This is where my conscience is telling me, so I will stand for what I believe is right," he said.

But Reyes said his endorsement did not necessarily mean he would talk about De los Reyes inside a church or during Mass, since there were other venues he could use.

During the proclamation rally of the AKP at Pavilion, Quezon City, Bishop Tobias extended and prayed over the candidates.

De los Reyes earlier said the party was having difficulty getting endorsement from Catholic parishes and even ordinary priests and religious leaders because of the latter's involvement with PPCRV.

"They want to keep their status, politic," he said.

Other religious groups

De los Reyes said the AKP was actively soliciting support from other religious sectors, such as the Protestant Pentecostals and Muslim groups.

JC DE LOS REYES

VICENTE SARMIENTO

RAMON ARGUELLES

He denied perceptions that the AKP was a Charismatic group or a front of the Church although he said the party was "close to Christians" core.

The 1971 Plenum Council of the Philippines and even Pope Benedict XVI himself have urged the Catholic faithful to "participate actively and lead in the renewing of politics" and "work for the just ordering of society," Reyes said.

"The AKP was formed in response to these calls," De los Reyes added.

He said the AKP's endorsement of Catholic positions on moral and social issues, such as opposition to the Reproductive Health Bill, can sometimes settle party's profile as primarily pro-labor.

Political parties blamed

On Wednesday, De los Reyes said major political parties have "corrupt and evil" "culture of politics" while the AKP offered an alternative "principled" politics that would be better for the country's future.

In an interview on dzRH radio's "Usapang Bayan" The Presidential Interview," De los Reyes of first blamed the ruling Lakas-Kampi-CMD and the Liberal and Nacionalista parties for the social ills that have plagued the country since it regained democracy in 1986.

"Our major political parties are not working for the citizens. If a party only disciplines its members and if it can tell them what the party's principles and platforms are and tell them to push for it, we wouldn't have turned into this perfect economy," he said.

De los Reyes said Lakas was indirectly responsible for the election-related Maguindanao massacre of Nov. 23 in which more than 58 people were killed.

He accused the Nacionalista Party of failing to institute legislation needed to enhance the constitutional prohibition against political dynasties and lambasted Liberal Party for failing to push for the adoption of uniform gun control laws.

Except Villar

De los Reyes wished all his opponents in the presidential race success, except for Sen. Manuel Villar, the Nacionalista Party standard-bearer.

"I'm scared because how much is he spending. P18 billion?" he said. Villar reportedly denies he is running that far away for the poor because he was once poor, he added.

De los Reyes said he was not running just to win but also to promote and revive the "lost ideals" of the country's eminent leaders like Jose Rizal, Gregorio del Pilar, Emilio Jacinto and Cayetano Arellano.

He admitted that he and the other AKP candidates were on the verge of giving up as they were encountering many problems, including those of the lack of funds and inadequate machinery.

However, "faith in God, hope and belief in miracles" were helping them continue their fight, De los Reyes said.

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The 'original' Jun Lozada ...

From page A1

with restaurant over the arrival of a man they thought was Rodolfo Noel Lozada Jr., who figured in the P130-million bribery at Bicol Rural Network (BRN) scandal that rocked the political scene two years ago.

Instead came a dude, after booking his low rides at Rem didn't draw much notice and who the welcomers thought was just a member of Lozada's "advance party."

Only when Atty Apolonio Lozada Jr., was formally displayed, suspicions and Cabinet officials—apparently knew how to quickly devise a public relations ploy even out of an embarrassing moment.

The forum organizers did invite Apolonio, but he said not Rodolfo Lozada in person appears yet another members of that "young" audience were expecting to see the former.

Apolonio quickly caused this the moment he faced those onstage... and so he decided to play along.

'The other Jun Lozada'

As though reciting a script prepared for Rodolfo, candidate Lozada went on to talk about the aborted SBN contract between the government and Chinese ZTE Corp. and how certain officials allegedly schemed to obtain kickbacks from the controversial project.

But toward the end of his speech, the flawless lecture was certainly surprised... and most likely dismayed... to hear the speaker finally clarifying that he was not the BRN whistle-blower.

By his own account, it took three sentences of the audience's consent to realize that they had been listening to "the other Jun Lozada," a senatorial candidate under the Pwersa ng Masang Pilipino of ousted President Joseph Estrada.

Being mistaken for the BRN witness is proving to have advantages and disadvantages for his election campaign, Lozada said in an Inquirer interview on Tuesday.

Not always welcome

"I do not want to capitalize too much on (the misidentification) because I will be accused of riding on his popularity," the candidate said.

"But one advantage is that you have an instant crowd especially among the young people who are familiar with Jun (Rodolfo Lozada's nickname)."

But in some cases, being a Jun Lozada could work against him. He recalled being advised by local party leaders to make it clear to the voters that he was not the BRN whistle-blowing campaign staffers in Quezon and Cebu.

"There was also a lot of noise in the country that I am a fake," he said.

Recounting the Cavite campaign sortie, he said "there was some embarrassment on my part because the people expected that it was Jun Lozada (the star witness) who would come."

"I've already arrived and as one town, I guess because they thought that I was just out to pick the adversary party of Jun Lozada," he added.

Family pawwow

But Lozada maintained he was out to win his people's votes on his own merits.

"I am not using the name of Rodolfo because I came in public service long before he did," he said, noting that the younger Jun had even served as his "executive" during his stint as Deputy Ombudsman-in-charge from 1998 to 2004.

The love of Rem is already belonged to the town, Lozada said.

Their ties, he said, had held a sort of a "pawwow" after reasonable back to determine who between him and his "cousin" would run for public office this year.

Lozada said the family didn't want to make it appear that two Lozadas were attempted to in the senatorial race.

Overshadowed

Placed in fourth and German, Lozada was appointed Philippine ambassador to Austria in 1992, at age 32. He later joined the Philippine Embassy to the Holy See as charge-d'affaires from 1999 to 1992.

During the Ramos administration, he served as ambassador to Palau and later as a consultant-reporter in presidential relations on foreign affairs and agricultural matters.

But in a campaign where connecting with the so-called mass voters is key, it seemed that Lozada's academic background and diplomatic experience had lured to given him no edge.

In recent stories, based on several showing power shots, Lozada has been overshadowed by more popular senatorial candidates like the rock-solid star Angelo Reyna, a movie actor whose numbers would allow recommendation at the "handsome" one.

His presence has also been eclipsed by another SBN "whistle-blower," fellow PMP senatorial candidate Jose "Joey" de Venecia III, then the losing SBN bidder who later questioned the contract.

'It's extortion'

THE YEHARTTO campaign for "living wage" is clearly aimed at electoral conditions for the communist New People's Army in plain execution, according to the Commission on Human Rights (CHR).

The CHR has condemned the practice—mainly by the NPA and other armed groups—of collecting a fee from candidates desiring to campaign in areas that they control.

It violates the basic human rights of electoral participation and suffrage, the CHR said.

Alexis Romero

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OPINION

Brazen Cross

EDITORIAL

THE DECISION OF THE MILITARY LEADERSHIP TO award the Bronze Cross to the officers who led the raid on the Morong resort and effected the arrest of the 43 health workers alleged to be members of the New People's Army is not only both to the ruin of law and the military's own highest standards. The raid remains mired in legal controversy; the health workers continue to oblige torture and other forms of maltreatment, above all, the inquiry on the NPA remains to be seen. Why rush to (favorable) judgment?

Let us, for the sake of argument, accept the official military version. Assuming that the Morong 43 were indeed medical workers of the NPA, engaged in a "bomb-making" exercise, was it right for the Armed Forces to award its fourth highest medal to the key officers who led the raid? We don't think so—because the raid itself has been awarded as illegal.

Sen. Loren Legarda, a reserve colonel herself, called it right when she criticized the decision to award the medals as "premature" at best. "The military has not even proven their legal authority to arrest the workers in return," she said. "When if the court determines that the arrest of the workers [was] without legal basis? Are they saying that it's all right to award soldiers and even policemen who make arrests/searches they cannot even prove? It's absurd, even surreal."

So, even if we were to assume that the Morong 43 were all communist insurgents, the better part of valor would still have been discretion. The AFP should have waited for the court to rule.

But was the raid, in fact, an out-and-out success? AFP spokesman Lt. Col. Romeo Brawner says it gave the military a major tactical victory. "Now that they are arrested, the NPA is not able to launch their plans for the next few months, until June 2010, specifically in areas in Central Luzon and Southern Luzon," he told AFC. Maybe. But we would have to wait for June to know for sure, wouldn't we?

In other words, even the most favorable interpretation of the facts would tell us that any rewarding of medals is, at best, premature. But wait. Is Brawner offering the argument that the arrest of medical workers who were already being taught how to make bombs (in other words, they still don't know how) would be enough to cripple the communist insurgency in Central and Southern Luzon? He must enlighten the public on this unusual, self-serving reading of the insurgency.

In the meantime, we will join the public in continuing to view the raid with great skepticism, and to hear the Morong 43's woeful tales of physical torture, psychological harassment and sexual abuse with sympathy. We have gone down this road before, during the darkest days of the Marcos dictatorship, and yet again during the Arroyo administration's detour to Palpuran-esque barbarity.

Indeed, the metaphor the AFP followed, in deciding to honor the controversial raiders with the Bronze Cross, comes right out of the Jovito Palparan playbook. At the height of the (politically motivated) killings that Palparan, then still in active service, said he may have inspired, President Macapagal-Arroyo singled out her favorite general in a feature of the National Address for Jovito, cringe-inducing praise.

There are many more soldiers, now already out of active service, who reflect the military's finest traditions. They can represent the armed services infinitely better than Palparan and his kind. The decision to award the Bronze Cross to the brigade commander and the battalion commander involved in the Morong raid (and, thus, in the subsequent violation of the suspects' basic human rights), the subject of intense outrage both within and outside the military) commits the AFP to an unreliable mistake. It reinforces in the public mind the undesirable connection between the President and her remaining Palpatinas.

A news report summarizes Brawner's thinking on the legal controversy in this way: "He added that even if the criminal charges are dismissed, the military would always consider the arrested health workers as supporters of the communist movement." In other words, the law can go to hell. Here we have the wise explanation for the decision to award the medals. They are the response of a military establishment lulled or lured into the Palparan mindset; they see a raised middle finger, a salute for brazenness.

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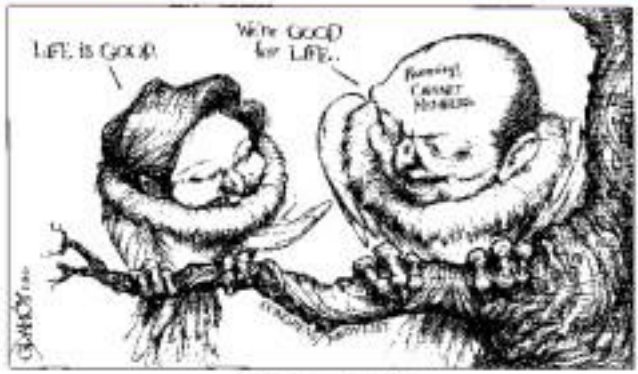

'Alis na dyan!'

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

AND SOMEBODY SHOULD TELL GLORIA ARROYO'S CABINET members who are running for public office. The Supreme Court has said very clearly that they are deemed resigned from the time they filed their certificates of candidacy. For them to refuse to leave constitutes grave abuse of discretion. It is not for them and even sorry they are. They will file a motion for reconsideration or a motion for clarification, they said.

This is clearly a dilatory tactic. There is nothing to clarify or reconsider.

The decision is very clear. It says appointed officials running in the May 10 elections were considered resigned upon the filing of their certificates of candidacy (COC) with the Commission on Elections. They have filed their COCs as far as the December, 2009. So they are considered resigned. It is automatic.

As of now, they are out of their jobs. Whether they do now in their offices officially will constitute usurpation of public authority. Whatever documents they sign and whatever orders they give will be null and void because they no longer have any authority to give them.

And the Court will not reconsider its decision or it is not willing a motion for reconsideration within 15 days and setting for the decision. This move only makes people suspect that those Cabinet members are prolonging their stay in office so that they can use government resources in their political campaign.

Presidential Management Staff Director General Romeo Lee Espera said he would step down before March 26, when the campaign period for local candidates begins. There is no need for him to wait until then. The Supreme Court did not say that their resignation as it deems will become effective when the campaign period for local candidates begins. It said they were deemed resigned "upon their filing of their COCs," which they have already done. It also said that the decision is "immediately executory" so what are they waiting for? There is nothing more for them to do except pick up and leave.

They don't even have to resign. They are already considered resigned since last December when they filed their COCs. If a President of the Philippines can be considered resigned without having to resign, the cabinet members follow as all, who are mere Cabinet members!

Joint Presidential Municipal Secretary telling them point blank that they no longer should sit in Cabinet meetings has no effect on them. According to Presidential Executive Assistant Director, the President told them (in Pampanga) "All those who were mentioned in the Supreme Court decision, all of you guys are not guests here."

Ehh, wasn't joking, she was serious, Espera said. That should have been enough for more sensible officials to see their position and leave. The President told them in no uncertain terms that they were not welcome in social and media—meaning the functions of the administration. She did not say, "Get out!" but that was what she meant. But it seems that these Cabinet members have their skins thick as military jungle.

They refused to leave immediately to "save" orders already. The people should tell them, "Alis na dyan!"

* * *

And what about Deputy Presidential Spokesperson Gary Olivar? Olivar, who is an American citizen? As a foreigner, he is not serving a foreign government position in the Philippines.

Malacañang says Olivar is a dual citizen, but the Dual Citizenship Law mandates that before a dual citizen can be appointed to a Philippine government position, he must first renounce his foreign citizenship.

Olivar has not done that. So, he is still saying his American passport to go in and out of the Philippines. I do not understand why he insists on using his American passport when, as a dual citizen, he must also have a Philippine passport—unless he just wants to flaunt his US citizenship and passport. He can insist a person like that being paid with Filipino taxpayers' money as an alter ego and mouthpiece of our President?

Since he has not renounced his US citizenship, Olivar's appointment may not be valid. Therefore, he may be liable for usurpation of authority and collecting pay to which he is not entitled.

Doesn't he realize that he is putting the President—whose appointment he, as dual citizen, criminal charges for appointing a foreigner who is by law not qualified to hold a position in the Philippine government?

Here a scene of climatic torture. Is this now the attitude of officials in the waning days of the GMA administration? Pakapalan?

* * *

Bribery has crept even into the presidential campaign. Former President Joseph Estrada revealed that another presidential candidate has offered to reimburse him his campaign expenses if he, Estrada, would withdraw in favor of this rival. That's bribery, pure and simple. Do we want a president who resorts to bribery to get what he wants?

A presidential candidate, who is reputed to be very rich, was rumored to have promised funds to candidates who join his team. That's bribery again. Is bribery going to be the policy of this candidate if he wins?

This candidate was reported to have declared upon billions of pesos for his political advertisements and commercials, way beyond the limit the campaign spending set by the Comelec. How is he going to recover that? Does the government treasury, where else? Don't believe his song and dance about spending the income for the people and that he won't recover his expenses. Tell that to the bloviates. He will get both his expenses, by hook or by crook, one way or the other, hopefully not both. And is the reason they run for public office in the first place.

Beware of big spenders in this election. The more they spend, the more they will steal if they win.

* * *

Comment: n.jasonville@gmail.com

Reversal of fortune

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

IN A DRAMATIC ABOUTFACE, THE SUPREME Court recently reversed its Dec. 1, 2009 decision in Quinto v Comelec, and has now declared that Cabinet officials and other appointive officials who are running in the May 2010 elections are deemed resigned from their posts. The best proof that the Court decided wisely is the immediate response by some affected Cabinet members. They complained that the Court's latest ruling, they said, just disappointed.

They commonly begin by saying they had "no choice but to obey," the Supreme Court, but then in sooner regard to dispute how like, "I will let the rules of court take its course," "I will respect the decision of the court," to become final. Others would delay things further, saying that they will request the Court's Judicial on a Motion for Reconsideration, which means effectively nothing or at least one month. The President's lawyers, friends like Atty. Sal Panelo, and what he needs is a new motion, not for clarification, and advised the Cabinet men not to resign in the meantime.

By their responses, they confirm precisely what the Supreme Court warned about: the temptation for candidates to cling to the perks of their office. To his credit, Justice Secretary Agnes Devanadera has filed her resignation, though she still issues it to the President to file the actual date of her departure.

What is striking about the latest 180 degree turn by the Court is, first of all, that same ghe resigned soon to be the bottom three days. The Quinto verdict is merely the third in the recent series. first, the Penera decision in which the Court changed its mind about premature campaigning, and next, the Lopez v Comelec decision in which the Court changed its mind (and more, more than twice) on the disputed status of 16 board nine cities. The audacity of judicial verdicts cannot be sustained by a feckless mind Court. The only way to reconcile the latest with the previous Decisions is both at the reasoning of the Court either that its conclusions, to reconcile the decisions rendered under that the practical outcomes, to be somewhat

rather than consequential. In other words, the best way to understand the latest change of mind is to see it as a change of heart.

In the first Quinto decision, the Court struck down the rule that appointive government officials (including Cabinet members) must resign from such offices in government corporations) shall be deemed resigned from their positions when they file their certificate of candidacy. The Court based its decision on the fundamental principle of equal treatment guaranteed by the Constitution's Declaration of Rights. The same, it was equal treatment between appointive and elective officials.

The purpose of the law was "to prevent the use of a governmental position to promote [the] candidacy, or create the impression of or convert influence on the electorate." It also aimed to "eliminate [] the danger that the discharge of official duty would be motivated by political considerations rather than the welfare of the public."

The language, it was argued, applied equally to appointive and elective officials, who can both use their offices to advantage during the campaign. In fact, the Court cited the Senate records when they were debating this rule, and said that Senators Robert Jaworski and Juan Ponce Enrile, Senators Rodolfo Biazon who called it a "self-serving" exemption in favor of the lawmakers. "If we are going to [apply this to] appointive officers of the government, . . . why should it not apply to the elective senior [including] senators and congressmen . . .? But if we would [to say for some other elective officials during our time, then we have to be consistent] resigned just like everybody else."

The Sth Quinto decision also cited the doctrine of overbreadth, the argument that the lofty purposes of the law can be subverted by thus running the prohibition: to limit it only to incumbents so high officials as governorships (and exclude the vice and presidents), to limit only to the highly political offices (and exclude the purportedly innocuous barangay officials), or merely to compel the candidates to go on leave of absence, rather than to resign altogether, or "Specific evils require specific treatment" rather than overly broad "prophylactic rules."

The second Quinto decision, on the other hand, approached the case from an entirely different direction. It affirmed the long-standing principle that elections are to be held regularly on specific periods, and that the will of the people be expressed through periodic elections." The equal-protection issue requires similar treatment for those similarly situated. Appointive and elective officials have different constituencies to whom they are accountable. Appointive officials "by their very nature . . . engage in partisan political activities all year round," while appointive officials are subject to the fundamental principle of political neutrality.

It was added: "One can just imagine the anomaly, conflict and tension that will arise if the Presidential Executive of the Philippine Regional Police, or the Philippine Army Commander, whose tenure are fixed-fixed within the presidency, will file a certificate of candidacy for governor of the province . . . This is a disaster waiting to happen."

With the sea change in the second Quinto, the Court essentially told us that the rules of a political contest aren't to be written by the incumbent lawmakers who, in the name of "equal treatment" of candidates, are preserving the undue advantage of incumbent politicians—a state tolerable than the unfair advantage of bureaucrats. The Cheval from the political coast is on his mind, but the threat from a political bystander may, the Court seems to say, strikes at the very dominant of our governmental.

* * *

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Edsa recollections of a non-hero

THE COUNTRY IS AWASH WITH RECOLLECTIONS of the Edsa People Power Revolution 24 years ago. Most of the recollections come from participants on center stage of that momentous historic event—Cesarios Aquino, Jaime Cardinal Sin, Juan Ponce Enrile, Fidel V. Ramos—and their respective camp followers, all rebel partisans. Most of their narratives are self-serving accounts of their role in that great conflict, making them heroes or villains. Heroes of epic conflicts write their own versions of the battles and declare the terms of abdication of the vanquished.

Over the years, most of these accounts have been published, depicting a resplendent account of the actors' views of history. Despite this habit of history-writing by participants, the story of Edsa I has remained an engrossing saga of conflict arising from the struggle of an oppressed people to overthrow a tyrannical modern dictatorship and reestablish liberty.

The historical record on the Philippines has been chronicled in the press with more voluminous journalistic output and with more passion than Edsa I. As a journalist, I have written about Edsa I as intensively not as a dramatic exercise since the original historical event but as a continuing saga with a singular story and not as a player who made history. At some point, I know someone would ask me where I was when Edsa broke out. To be honest my presence in Manila when the revolution broke out on the evening of Feb. 22, 1986, was not by design. It was totally unplanned—as unplanned as the military mutiny that only flared after the discovery of the conspiracy against Marcos.

Journalists are mere bystanders of great events, but to write history, they must be on the spot at the moment when the action begins. If one is not there on the tipping moment of history, there is no story to tell. Today, 24 years after elsewhere, I am sorry to say, I will be laggard.

When Ferdinand Marcos called a snap election on Nov. 3, 1985 on [illegible] I was preparing for a field trip to the Philippines to gather material for an MA

Analysis

Armando Doronila

thesis on political change in Asia at Waseda University in Shibuya, Tokyo. Months before, I took a one-month leave from the university's Center of Southeast Asian Studies, and from my duties as foreign news sub-editor at a leading Australian newspaper, the Melbourne Age. I did not expect a political explosion in Manila. I assumed Ferdinand Marcos' election call had crushed up the conflict between the Marcos regime and the opposition. I was curious how this conflict would be resolved. I had been away from Manila for 10 years after I was given a threatening letter by the Philippine Consulate in Hong Kong, then Minister Eraldo Philidian, following my release from Marcos' prison, Camp Crame, in 1975.

When the Manila Bureau Operation (BAM) called Indira Gandhi from Manila at 6:30 p.m. on Feb. 22, I was on the 18th floor of the Marriott Hotel, where I was being published again after it was closed by Martial Law in 1972. The editor in chief, former Manila Rep. Teng Bayo, and managing editor Virgil Tinitigan took me in to write news analyses. That evening my colleagues in the Philippine Press Club had been elected by our reporters Manny Magaru, Sheila Coronel and Walter Mangahas that something was going to blow up at the Camp Aguinaldo headquarters being rallied by Enrile and Ramos. TV films showed soldiers in trucks hastically loading sacks of weapons into the camp's metal hall as Enrile and Ramos prepared to appear before a battery of media people who packed the recital hall. Enrile was alleging an US-Ho conspiracy. I thought he was ready to die. The rebel soldiers had their doors studded with symbols. Philippine flag just like with the red field up, a declaration of war.

In the early evening, Jaime Cardinal Sin appeared on TV to call on the people to Agoncillo to protect Enrile and Ramos, thereby becoming a confession that Marcos stole the election in Cagayan, his home province.

In midnight cigarettes[illegible] streams of people collected in the streets, swelling as the minutes ticked. I was at Bonbo in a cassette place in Santa Ana in Quezon City. My family and I joined a month on Commonwealth Avenue up to Edsa and settled into the house of a relative who was working there as the instructor of Ortiga Avenue and Edsa, at the Department of Labor and Employment building.

I remembered why the rebels did not call beyond that point to Camp Aguinaldo. I would to learn later their intentions were disallowed orders from Gen. Fabian Ver to assault opposition, those and priests where throwing themselves on the path of the tanks and embracing them, giving rise to an incident, widely covering the Holy Beauty. It was a moving sight.

By Sunday morning, an impasse developed as more crowds collected after Enrile decided to join Ramos at Camp Crame, where he was going to make his stand. We were at the corner of Aurora Blvd. and Edsa, when the announcement came that Marcos called his armed forces reinforcements from the Philippine Constabulary from Avenue, formerly Santolan, itself, in front of one of Crame's gates was clogged by a solid mass of people.

All sorts of people, young and old, brought sandwiches and toasted them to the defenders of Crame over the barbed wire fence. Some called the rebel soldiers the "New Armed Forces of the Philippines." For the first time since Marcos declared martial law, the people and the soldiers were friends.

I didn't join the people in the streets to prove that I was brave. I didn't go to Edsa to play hero. Part of the reason I was there was that I was under a duty to witness. If the people were not afraid to die, I didn't have any reason to stay at home. From that moment, I was re-engaged with Philippine journalism after a decade of exile.

'President of me'

At Large

Rina Jimenez-David

the Carlos P. Romulo auditorium at RCBC Plaza.

A panel of judges, chaired by Mr. Cesar Felicano, chair emeritus Emily Abrera and CNN Hero of the Year Gloria Watanabe, as co-chairs, selected the winners. The other members of the panel were former basketball player and now trainer Alex Compton, SPEX David Celdran, and lawyer and TV host Daniela Stuart Andam.

There was many more people vying for honors at stake. The winner got to bring home a plaque and P100,000, with a matching amount given to the school for leadership programs; the first runner-up received a plaque and P50,000, while the second runner-up received a plaque and P30,000.

For those of us in the audience, it was often difficult to believe that the finalists were only in high school, since their pieces were, for the most part, thoughtful and even insightful. And their voices, clear and well-projected, left no room for misunderstanding for the rhetorical flourishes and dramatic touches that often characterized "oratorical contests" in the past.

Then again, maybe that only reveals my age.

THE FOOD and Drug administration recently banned seven citizen-based in-mission bodies and two skin-whitening products that were found to contain mercury. Earlier, Health Secretary Esperanza Cabral, who must be commended for the strong action she has taken on these matters, said that the FDA didn't would no longer give permits to sell thermometers with mercury and would soon include blood pressure gauges containing mercury.

Those were welcome words indeed. Case solid on Toxic Southeast Asia, which also called on the DOH to step up its own campaign to ban mercury thermometers and sphygmomanometers.

It seems that mercury is under siege here," said Pure Aerial, MDWH-SEA Program Officer for Mercury in Health Care. "Let us not forget mercury thermometers and sphygmomanometers. These devices need not be tested for their mercury content. It's out in the open that they are mercury containing."

• • •

"PUTTING more money in your people's pockets" is one area where Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and the developmental Hunger Mitigation Program (HMP) of the Aboitiz foundation share.

The cornerstone of this component is income generation, including programs and projects related to improving productivity in agriculture, livelihood, micro-enterprise promotion, scholarships and employment assistance skills training. Land distribution is upheld as vital to this part of the component.

The National Nutrition Council, which oversees the HMP, has allocated for ongoing nationwide implementation of the Anti-Hunger Task Force in 2009.

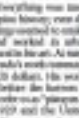
A total of 992.4 billion was spent to loans to almost 1 million active clients in their various micro-financing projects. Microfinance of approximately 1.2 million jobs.

About 4,000 jobs were created in the agricultural sector through emergency employment and contractual programs of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Under the Pangkising Gloria Arbeitsbrigades of the Bukid, TUPAD Program of the DOLE and the HEA Program of the DA, 605,000 individuals were given skills that would make them more productive and employable.

In anticipation of the negative effects of El Niño and the rise in hunger incidence, the government is also implementing the following economic access in more affordable basic food items especially among the poor. Providing more employment opportunities through the CLEEP (Comprehensive Livelihood Emergency Employment Program) and other employment-generating programs are among the possible interventions to help poor families cut via the storms.

'Quezon's curse'



Looking Back

Ambeth R. Ocampo

seasons that are no more. Everything was transient in this land, and the only thing that survived the ravishes is Amorsolo's paintings seemed to smile.

While Amorsolo lived and worked in urban Manila, he escaped into the rustic in his art. As rare national auctions today, Amorsolo's work consumed as to seven-figure sums in US dollars. His works appeared in the 1939 New York World's Fair, the Golden Gate International Exposition in San Francisco, and the Philippine Pavilion at the Paris International Exposition of 1937. He had been elected by our reporters Manny Magaru, Sheila Coronel and Walter Mangahas that something was going to blow up at the Camp Aguinaldo headquarters being rallied by Enrile and Ramos. TV films showed soldiers in trucks hastically loading sacks of weapons into the camp's metal hall as Enrile and Ramos prepared to appear before a battery of media people who packed the recital hall. Enrile was alleging an US-Ho conspiracy. I thought he was ready to die. The rebel soldiers had their doors studded with symbols. Philippine flag just like with the red field up, a declaration of war.

Believe it or not

Pinoy Kasi

Michael L. Tan

IN TERMS OF GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP) PER capita, we are almost the same level as the United States in 1945. That statistic should give us a lot of comfort: at least we are only about 65 years behind, not 100 years.

And wait, there's more good news, and I'm serious here: in terms of infant mortality rate—calculated as the number of children, per 1,000 live births, who die before the age of one—my figure for the year 2007 was about equivalent to that of the United States in 1917.

Again (saving the optimist), that means that although our economy is measured by per capita GDP is 92 years behind the US, we lag behind by "only" about 40 years when it comes to child survival.

All these figures came out of an incredible three-in-one "tarlac" in a recent public conference called Capitalizing Trends, sponsored by Earthlinks Internet in Sweden, integrating statistics from all over the world. (You can visit gapminder.org over the Internet.)

I first learned about this computer program at an international conference on maternal health two years ago. Up on stage, in a darkened room, multi-colored bubbles floated around, each representing a country, showing how they were doing in terms of various economic variables, or in line with the conference theme, assorted public health indicators.

Figures and bubbles

The speaker was the enigmatic Hans Rosling, a Swedish physician behind the Gapminder foundation. Holding large the audience spellbound for an hour with what was basically a history of public health over the last 200 years, playing with the figures and bubbles to show how countries fared over that time period. Not an easy task, considering that both history and public health are often seen as boring subjects, unless the speaker is Hans Rosling (or our own Isabelo Ocampo).

I was so captivated by Rosling's speech that I looked him up on the Internet. It turned out he had been featured several times on "TED.com" that other wonderful Internet resource that has videos of the most brilliant speakers sharing their ideas on topics as diverse as God, the brain, food, entertainment and, in Rosling's case, development.

Rosling has a very simple message, one that could be paraphrased by "believe it or not": the world can no longer be divided into "developing" and "developed" countries. In many of the so-called "developing" countries, including the poorest ones, there have been significant improvements in many of the socio-economic and social indicators.

Every time I listen to one of his talks, I get no cure of those "Yes, we can" moods. He may be a poor country in terms of GNP, but we can still move in terms of health, housing, education. A recent congress at the Ateneo, featuring 16 projects related to poverty alleviation, certainly showed that. (I just did a three-part column on that congress and it should appear some time soon in the [illegible].)

I know that many of my friends, and readers, are more pessimistic. Some feel the corruption is too pervasive. Others will point to the malnourished and big business as being too powerful. And still others will say we just don't have the economic resources to do what we want.

But it's for all of those reasons that I see Hans Rosling's videos in my dreams. I don't agree with everything he says (he tends to give too much credit to a free market economy for solving problems, for instance), but his core "can do" message is important.

Let me repeat: the glass is presume now, but still taking all from statistics. The optimist looks at the many instances where so-called developing countries show annual achievements in health, education, housing, but, and this is where the "believe it or not" pessimist comes in, you will also find absolutely dismal conditions in those countries, conditions that belong literally to the Middle Ages.

Let's look at some statistics from the National Demographic Health Survey (NDHS). These surveys have been conducted since every five years, involving huge samples of women all over the country. The findings from the latest survey, conducted in 2008, have been released. (See downloads at [illegible].com/dhs-survey.)

The latest NDHS reports that in the National Capital Region, for every 1,000 children born, 28 will die before the age of 5. It might seem like a small number but still means several thousand deaths each year. Even more disturbing is that in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), the under-five mortality rate is 94. That's almost 10 percent of all births.

The NDHS breaks figures down by urban and rural areas, by region, and, most usefully, by income quintiles (i.e., from the poorest 20 percent to the richest 20 percent). With the poorest 20 percent of our women, for every 1,000 children born, 50 will die before the age of 5. With the richest 20 percent, the figure is 17.

Many of the early deaths among children can be prevented through vaccinations. But here again we find great discrepancies within the country. Even in the National Capital Region, with all its hospitals and health centers, the NDHS reports that only 83 percent of children have the basic vaccinations. Nearby Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas and Quezon) has better coverage at 87 percent. When you move south to Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan), coverage is only 79 percent; in the ARMM, only 50 percent of the children are protected by the basic vaccinations. No wonder measles is still a killer disease.

Here's another figure that startles me: 1.1 million children are still fully immunized, with cities and towns that have large urban poor populations having low vaccination coverage and high child mortality rates. The NDHS is packed with other figures showing inequities for many other social indicators, from nutrition to housing, and the discrepancies are not just by geographical region but also by women's educational attainment and socioeconomic status.

Beyond poverty

But we need to look beyond poverty. The MDGs is indeed poor, but the lack of health services is due as well to the neglect of that region by the national government, as well as the corruption of local warlord politicians.

Amidst all of these depressing statistics, there are a growing number of examples from local governance units showing how people can mobilize for health, even if they are 40k or 50k class municipalities. Through community mobilization, including the training of community health workers (and their protection from harassment), life-saving health services can be delivered.

The just is "how" should." Precisely because there is so much inequity, we cannot wait for economic development to take place before we get the social services going. I would go a step further and argue, as many public health advocates do, that improvement in education and health actually speed up economic development. No more incredible "believe it or not" figures, but simple common sense: a better educated and healthy citizenry will also mean they are more innovative and productive.

• • •

Email: mtan@inquirer.com.ph

Meralco service at work.

It takes regular maintenance and constant upgrading of our power distribution facilities to assure the delivery of reliable electricity to this region's ever-growing requirements. In the following areas are scheduled. Please be assured that we are working as efficiently and as quickly as always causing the least inconvenience.

TUESDAY, MARCH 2, 2010

MANILA (ERMITA AND MALATE)

BETWEEN 1:00PM AND 5:00PM — THE WHOLE OF CIRCUIT CLEMENTA 1102, 1103, 1401, 1172, 1201 AND 1202

Portion of T. M. Kalaw, Dr. M. Ponce, Gen. Luna, A. Soriano Jr. Ave., Del Pan, including Concepcion, Bonifacio Center, Pedro Gil, Taft Ave., Adriatico, Pond Pilot, Remington Hotel, Orosa, Menlo 1, Ermita, Chinatown and Jorge Bocobo Elementary Sts. in Ermita.

Portion of Padre Faura St. from Arcega Place to Faura Park including M. Bocobo College of Arts and Science, Concepcion Church, Grey 1, Bocobo, Esguerra Civic Manila and Faura Apartments, etc. in Ermita.

Portion of Gen. Luna, Mabini, Pres. Quirino II, Quirino II, Quirino III, including San Carlos Mansion, Promenade Tower, United Nations Ave. 1, Times and Congressional Apartments, etc. in Ermita.

Portion of Gen. Luna, Mabini, Pres. Quirino II, Pres. Quirino III, including Virginia Mansion and Mabini Restaurant, Maya Hotel and Restaurant, Tabeling Restaurant, Mabini Tower, Tridonian — Padre Faura, Arcadia and Padre Faura in Ermita.

Portion of M. Adriatico, Orlando St. from Padre Faura St. to near Concepcion Church, Dr. Pilapil, Dr. Ocampo, Dr. Quintos, Dr. Orosa, Dr. Pilapil, San Beda Alumni Center, San Beda Graduate School of Law, San Beda Mendiola Building, Mendiola Center, Mendiola Arcade, Mendiola Condominium, Mendiola Tower, Mendiola Plaza, Mendiola Coffee, Mendiola, Sky Ranch, Pacific St., Jorge Bocobo Elementary School, St. Mary's, Mendiola, Holy Rosary and Mendiola Sts. in Manila.

Portion of A. Soriano Jr. Ave. from Padre Faura to near Mendiola St. including Ayala Building, M. H. Del Pilar, Cuadrado, Pedro Gil, Gen. M. Melchor and Mendiola Sts. in Manila.

REASON: Preventive maintenance work under Meralco Grids extension

TUESDAY TO WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2 - 3, 2010

CAVITE (KAWIT/IMUS)

BETWEEN 10:00PM TO 5:00AM THE NEXT DAY AND BETWEEN 11:00PM AND 7:00AM (WED), 03/03/10 — THE WHOLE OF CIRCUIT CAMPANILLA 0402

Portion Gen. E. Aguinaldo Highway from Barangay Campanilla underbridge to and including Barangay Pinagtipunan, Barangay Tramo, Old City Cemetery Site and Civic Center Site in Bgy. Tramo.

Portion of Governor Drive from Gen. E. Aguinaldo Highway to and including Barangay Pinagtipunan in Bgy. Tramo.

REASON: Repair work inside Meralco Substation substation

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 2010

CAVITE (BOG. 2, BACOOR AND ALFONSO)

BETWEEN 9:00AM AND 3:00PM — PORTION OF CIRCUIT TERRANTE 1101

Portion of Caridad Lane — Mariner Road from near Fortunato Apartment to Bay Caridad Lane, Gen. E. Aguinaldo to Aboitiguez — Mariner Road in Bay Mariner, Mariner Road/Bay Road Alternate, Gen. E. Aguinaldo

REASON: Line reconductoring work along Caridad Lane — Mariner Road in Bay Caridad Lane, Gen. E. Aguinaldo, Lanzo

WEDNESDAY TO THURSDAY, MARCH 3 - 4, 2010

CAVITE (BACOOR CITY)

BETWEEN 11:00PM (WED), 03/03/10 AND 5:00AM (THU), 04/04/10 — PORTION OF CIRCUIT LES-CHINES 0401

Portion of San Evangelista St. from ETC Gate to near Talaguit Elementary School including Carbonado Place and Panorama St. in Bgy. Santa 4

REASON: Relocation of facilities affected by SMEX road widening project along San Evangelista St. in Bgy. Santa 4, Bacoor City, Cavite

THURSDAY TO FRIDAY, MARCH 4 - 5, 2010

BULACAN (OBAT, BALIWAG, BUSTOS, POLILLO AND SAN RAFAEL), AND PAMPANGA (APALIT, SAN SIMON AND CAMIGUIN)

BETWEEN 10:00PM AND 5:00PM (FRI), 03/05/10 AND THEN BETWEEN 9:00AM AND 5:00AM (FRI), 04/02/10 — THE WHOLE CIRCUIT OF BALIWAG 0115 AND PORTION OF CIRCUIT BALIWAG 0118

Portion of Sapang Bayan Road from Poblete Road in Bgy. Obat, Poblete Compound in Bgy. Pinagkuartelan, Poblete Road in Bgy. Pinagkuartelan, Bgy. Hall in Bgy. Pinagkuartelan, Tabeling Restaurant, Ilaya Road in Bgy. Obat, Bgy. Hall in Bgy. Obat

Meralco seeks higher systems loss cap

By Aiby R. Barria

BEGINNING FROM the job it assumed in the hands of the regulator last year, Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) now seeks to raise the cap on system losses imposed on distribution utilities.

Under Resolution No. 17, series of 2008, the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) reduced the system loss cap to only 6.5 percent in 2010 from the previous 9.5 percent.

With the ERC now helm now in effect, Meralco has the means to recover the cost of electricity that has been lost either to transmission through power lines or pilferage.

The power distributor hopes to change all that. It has again petitioned the ERC to raise the system loss cap for distribution utilities to 9 percent from the 6.5 percent currently being implemented.

Downside risks

A system loss cap refers to the limit beyond which a utility may no longer recover from its customers the losses it incurred.

According to the ERC, a lower system loss cap will likely translate to a lower system rate charge for electricity consumers.

But Meralco explained that the "disincentive from the previously recoverable system loss cap of 9.5 percent presents significant financial risks, not only relative to the [utility's] bottom line but all energy stakeholders in general."

Meralco added that under the amended resolution, the effects of the global financial crisis on the country and its impact on distribution utilities, would also be taken into account.

Meralco's system loss in 2009 stood at 8.03 percent. The utility said it would earmark this year a large portion of its capital expenditure budget for projects aimed at cleansing its system loss.

In August 2009, Meralco submitted a letter of request to the ERC to defer the implementation of a new system loss cap of 6.5 percent starting January 2010 or to keep the cap at 9 percent.

Rejected

But the request was rejected by the ERC in November last year.

"It is true that the sharing of electricity consumption between industrial consumers that are connected to high voltage and residential consumers that are connected to low voltage has an effect on the total system loss. However, it should be noted that both the existing and the proposed new caps were set regardless of whether or not the franchise area is highly urbanized," said ERC chair Jesus Francisco in his letter dated Nov. 23 to Meralco.

As for Meralco's concern over being in advance of pilferage, Isico said the commission's stance remains "clear, distribution utilities like Meralco must first outhaust means and incentives to deter or curb the same."

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SJ 335 / SJ 336	SJ 353 / SJ 354
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Gamot na tatoo, presyong tama, mula sa Mercury Drug *Manasakan!*

Metro rail loop finally finished

Francisco Ed

The P7.6-billion project completes the LRT Metro Rail Transit (MRT) Line 3 loop.

"This is to decongest Metro Manila. By making it convenient because it's U-shaped, you don't have to go down and take another transport. You can go anywhere and get off anywhere, and you just take the transport for your final destination," Ms Arroyo told reporters during the inaugural ride.

After 16 months of work, the project is expected to operate commercially by March 15.

The North Extension project involved the construction of a 8.7-kilometer elevated viaduct to connect the LRT's northernmost station, Monumento, to the MRT's North Avenue station in Edsa.

Three new stations

The project, built by Old Cannard Inc. and Hyat Balfour Inc., plans to add three new stations on the northern end of the LRT line 1—Balintawak, Roosevelt and North Avenue—all along Edsa. The last two will be shared with the MRT.

By the middle of next month, LRT Authority (LRTA) Administrator Melquiades Robles said the government would open only the Balintawak station, which is strategically located to benefit commuters coming from the North Luzon Expressway.

While trains can already pass through all stations, more tests are needed to ensure the safety of the Roosevelt and North Avenue stations, Robles said.

He said the extension, once operational, could boost the number of people riding the LRT line by up to 100,000 a day. LRT 1 serves an average of half a million people a day. The LRTA expects to have all three new stations operational before the third quarter of this year.

Robles said the construction of the North Extension, dubbed as "Closing the Loop," was one of the cheapest and fastest infrastructure projects of the government.

90-minute ride

Ms Arroyo took the train ride from the MRT Taft-Edsa station and back in one-and-a-half hours after raising the flag and speaking at the 24th anniversary celebration of Edsa I at the People Power Monument. (See story on Page A1.)

She walked for a few minutes from the monument to the nearest gate of Camp Aguinaldo, and then took a presidential bus for the Taft-Edsa station, with Cabinet officials and reporters in tow.

Faster, cheaper, safer

The President said that closing the LRT-MRT loop "will bind the metropolis as never before, so that the people can travel faster, cheaper and safer from any part of the metropolis to another."

Ms Arroyo paid tribute to the train commuters, saying they Edsa was "synonymous to the quiet heroism of the ordinary Filipino, the commuter who travels the MRT or LRT, every day in and from work, to and from school."

When the MRT train pulled to a stop at its last station on North Avenue, Ms Arroyo and her fellow passengers got off, and transferred to a spanking new LRT train. [The tracks of the LRT and MRT lines have different gauges, so a commuter must transfer from an MRT or LRT train to another LRT or MRT train to take the second leg of the loop.]

The LRT train took Ms Arroyo and the rest of the passengers from North Avenue to Monumento, stopping only at the Balintawak station for an inspection, and then on to the Edsa-Taft station in Pasay.

From there, the group walked on a connecting bridge to the MRT station, for the train ride back to Ayala.

1.2M passengers

On the LRT train, Ms Arroyo took her seat at the last car, and counsel Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza as cell reporters the capacity of commuter trains before she assumed power in 2001 and at present.

"Before the Arroyo administration, the capacity was only 400,000, from 600 1.2 million," Mendoza told reporters and photographers who crowded around Ms Arroyo.

Ms Arroyo agreed, saying that this was all part of her infrastructure thrust in 4-point agenda.

Fruits of VAT

The North Extension project interconnects Line 1 (LRT) in from Monumento to Balintawak; Line 2 (LRT) line from Recto to Marikina-Pasig; and Line 3 (MRT) Line from Taft Avenue to North Avenue.

Once completed, the ridership of 1.2 million passengers daily is expected to climb by 100,000, Robles said.

"The spirit behind this is the President. This is the cheapest. This is 100-percent local fund," he said of the project.

Ms Arroyo agreed. "Yes, correct. There's no loan ... These are the fruits of (87 (value-added tax)."

A few minutes into the train ride, the LRT coach air conditioning unit suddenly stopped working, prompting questions from reporters.

Transport officials, however, explained that the stretch from North Avenue to the Balintawak station was "not yet electrified."

After the train left the Balintawak station, the air conditioner switched back on.

"We should expect fewer buses in Edsa," said Vice President Noli de Castro, who joined Ms Arroyo on the train ride as the Balintawak station.

South Extension

While checking on the progress of the North Extension project, Ms Arroyo revived plans to extend the LRT 1 line to Cavite province.

The South Extension project, which was earlier shelved by the transportation department, aims to extend LRT 1 to Bacoor in Cavite, from Baclaran, Pasay.

The South Extension, estimated to cost about $1 billion, will add about 15 km of new tracks in the LRT line 1. The Cavite extension has been on the state's drawing board for years.

MRT TRAIN engineer Ivan Ilio (on left) with the President and the Vice President on board.

Across the NATION

GMA stops orders of Marina chief

By Irene R. Jiao Cruz
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION and Communications (DOTC) suspended the implementation of policies of Maritime Industry Authority (Marina) Administrator Ma. Elena Bautista that were being opposed by some shipping operators.

This was the outcome of a meeting held on Wednesday between the protesting shipping company owners and President Macapagal-Arroyo on board Supercat 1.

Members of the Visayas Association of Ferryboat and Catamaran Service Operators (VAFCSO), planned to stage a maritime holiday on March 1 in protest of Bautista's memorandum circulars.

These include the industry and promotion policy which the shipping companies claimed was not applicable to the Philippines, the increase of fines and penalties against them, even for minor violations and the US Coast Guard standard life jacket requirement.

VAFCSO asked for the suspension of the circulars and the ouster of Bautista as Marina administrator for issuing the orders without consulting the group.

Bautista, who was also present during the meeting with Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza, said a technical working group would be created to consult the shipping companies.

She expressed hope that with the suspension of the circulars, the planned maritime holiday would not push through.

However, Jose Danny Subla, president and chief executive officer of Bohle Shipping and VAFCSO board member, said the association was not fully satisfied with the outcome of the meeting with the President, which he described as very brief.

While no plan for the suspension of Bautista's circulars was granted, Bohle said its request for the change of Marina leadership was not addressed.

He said VAFCSO was expected to meet on Wednesday night in Cagayan if it would go ahead with the strike.

Bohle noted that the members still wanted Bautista out of the maritime agency and replace her with someone knowledgeable about the shipping industry.

VAFCSO has 27 members, including Trans-Asia Shipping Lines, Cokaliong Shipping Lines, George and Peter Lines, Bohle Shipping Lines, Lite Shipping, Jadestar Shipping and F.E. Lines, whose vessels ply routes in the Visayas and Mindanao.

Coast Guard finds remains of missing in Princess sinking

THE PHILIPPINE COAST GUARD said it recovered the skeletal remains of five of the fatalities in the sinking of MV Princess of the Stars off Sibuyan Island in Romblon nearly two years ago.

The retrieval of the remains on Feb. 9 raised hopes more would be found, said Lt. Edgar Rocabero, Coast Guard station commander in Romblon, in a phone interview.

Rocabero said Coast Guard officials were coordinating with Sulpicio Lines, owner of the vessel, on bringing the remains to Cebu, where most of the victims were from.

Beyond recognition

The skeletal remains were beyond recognition, but those of a male victim was identified through an ID card found with his remains.

Rocabero said the remains' discovery raised hopes more would be found especially in the ship's cabin where most passengers were trapped during the sinking.

The Coast Guard quoted Vincent Bolisano, project engineer of the salvage operations being conducted by Royal Jotun Pacific Ilustrators Inc. (RJPII), the new owner of the ship, as saying divers were also forced among the remains.

Ship said

At least 546 passengers and crewmen died on June 21, 2008, when the Princess sank in the height of Typhoon "Frank."

Sulpicio Lines has since sold the ships to RJPII.

Jocelyn Go, Sulpicio spokesperson chief, said the first box not known to have been part of the discovery of the remains.

"We will coordinate and seek guidance," said Go.

He said Sulpicio may also seek the help of the Romblon-based International Consultation on Missing Persons to identify the retrieved remains.

Coast Guard and workers from RJPII and CV Gaspar Lightering have started the uprighted ship struck 300 meters closer to shore in an ongoing effort to salvage the vessel.

Under a deal between Sulpicio and RJPII, the shipping line would handle the identification of remains that would be discovered in the ship wreck, while RJPII would be in charge of salvaging the sunken vessel.

Series of mishaps

Go said relatives of those who died are assured of the firm's help in identifying their loved ones.

The Princess left Manila for Cebu City on June 20, 2008.

Before noon, the following day, it was battered by strong winds and waves near Mindoro, causing it to tilt to its left and sink eventually.

Only 111 passengers and crewmen survived, while 238 others are declared missing, including the ship captain, Florencio Maclucso II.

The sinking was the latest in a series of accidents at sea involving vessels owned by Sulpicio Lines, prompting calls for the government to revoke the firm's license to operate. Marlowe Cinco, Inquirer Southern Luzon, and Jerry Esplanada in Manila

HEARTED
A farmer continues to tend to his farm in Pilot, Nueva Ecija, clinging to hopes he could save the only source of his livelihood from the ravages of El Niño.
EDITOR MAILFOTO/JOEY MERCADO

Diesel plant shuts down amid Mindanao power shortage

ILIGAN CITY—SOME OF THE reasons for a shortage of electricity in Mindanao have nothing to do with falling water levels, but rising costs.

While the island-wide power outages largely blamed on the decline in water levels in sources of hydroelectricity, the National Power Corp. ordered the shutdown of a 35-megawatt power plant because it was too expensive to operate.

Pedro Arabis, officer in charge of the Napocor operations department here, said the Iligan Diesel Power Plant (IDPP) was ordered shut down because of the huge costs of operating it.

The plant is owned by the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management (PSALM).

Another PSALM power plant, also in Iligan, is capable of generating 54 megawatts but is not operational yet.

Manuel Cabungcas, engineer and Iligan plant manager, said the Napocor order came early this month.

It costs P68 million a month to operate the 35-megawatt plant, he said.

Sources in the National Grid Corp. of the Philippines (NGCP), however, said the 35-MW plant was operating until a top Napocor official ordered it shut down for unknown reasons.

Arabis said on Wednesday water level at Lake Lanao plummeted to 699.16 meters, further reducing the capacity of seven power plants in Agusan river, the lake's only outlet.

These Agus 1 and 2 operate only one turbine unit instead of two; Agus 4 runs only one unit instead of the usual three. Agus 6 and 7 runs one unit instead of five.

Arabis said another danger looms as water levels recede, which would restrict the turbines and destroy them.

The NGCP said on Wednesday that the Agus plants were only generating 137 megawatts instead of the normal 454 megawatts.

Rachel Used and Ryan B. Romero, Inquirer Mindanao

Yellow is taboo at Marcos mausoleum

BATAC CITY—THERE ARE NO yellow flowers in the mausoleum of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos near the town plaza.

Gone from the bushes bougainvillea and white zinnias gone and sure, the only colors within sight of the Marcos compound during the week-long 1986 Edsa People Power Revolution celebrations are red, blue, orange and pink billboards and posters of presidential aspirants.

This is, after all, ground zero for the Marcos dictatorship, which was toppled 24 years ago by the Edsa uprising.

"Do not expect an Edsa celebration. We never had one," said Dreamer Yaps, a government employee.

"The Ilocanos have strong memories," said Susana Ural, a retired nurse.

On Feb. 22, only a group of Ita Ibilayan from California and Solomon town logged in as visitors of the mausoleum to view Marcos' preserved remains.

But some like the Ibalon Mirrors way again draw attention since their fall in 1986.

Two presidential candidates—Manuel Villar and Gilbert Teodoro—said they have open to finally burying Marcos' remains at the Libingan ng Mga Bayani.

Villar, Nacionalista Party (NP)-backed senator, was in Cuba on Feb. 25 when he said a Marcos burial should heal the country. Former Bacon Marcos Gov. Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. is NP's guest senatorial candidate.

Teodoro, standard-bearer of administration Lakas Kampi CMD, offered the same sentiment. Iligan Congressman Celso Lobregat

"Do not expect an Edsa celebration. We never had one'

The prospect of a long-awaited Marcos burial, however, is not elating everyone in Batac. "Ayo Marcos is our guardian here," said Yaps.

Clarissa Jolene de Rosas, senior high school student in Laoag City, said, "Why do it now? I living him in Bacon State or in Libingan ng Mga Bayani will not quell any differences. In the hearts of Ilocanos, he was a hero. End of story."

"The hero is no longer alive," the Marcoses in the Ayala-owned Laoag Mirror rivals. What matters in the youth is how our leaders get our economy moving and not me about moving the body of the late president," she said.

The mausoleum has become a popular tourist destination. Nearby, entrepreneurs set up foot booths that sell noodles, rice, rice sausages, processed meat and rice cake from Candon City.

Old folk still revere the elder Marcos but young Ilocanos are struggling whether to embrace loyalty or change. Priam Clisaris and Cristelina Arandez, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Ifugao rice terraces crumbling from severe heat

By the Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAYOMBONG, NUEVA VIZcaya—The centuries-old Ifugao rice terraces are starting to crumble from the heat brought by the dry spell, setting back efforts to restore them.

Hugan Gov. Teodoro Baguilat Jr. said he saw dry rice paddies in Hungduan town, which is struggling to proceed with the second-to-last rice planting season.

"Hungduan is an indigenous town that is harvested only once a year and is "more sturdy [against drought] than lowland rice watersheds," Baguilat said.

"This is not in Kiangan. I am concerned that this is the same situation in Lagawe terraces in the towns of Banaue, Hungduan and Mayoyao[,]," he said.

"Definitely, funds for the restoration of invasive molds will have to be multiplied," he added.

Ifugao had prepared restoration plans months ago but the measures in the wake of devastation wrought by tropical storms "Ondoy" and "Pepeng" that struck toward the end of 2009, Baguilat said.

Because the Cordillera mountains are the watersheds of various lowland river systems, terrace irrigation is still manageable, he said.

Ifugao's lowland towns, however, are suffering drought conditions, he said.

The governor said Ifugao has received P62 million in rice and corn damage in some towns. Ifugao also reported the death of 58 postwar animals due to the heat.

In Banaue, Isabela, which is at the border of Ifugao, fish pond operators have been selling tilapia at bargain prices.

Eduardo Galicia said he and 200 other fish cage operators have been forced to sell tilapia at P40-P50 a kilogram, down from P70 per kg.

Sarsuelan Bondoc, Ifugao Dam reservoir division chief, said water level dropped to 150 meters from 193 meters.

Marlene Danael, operations manager of the National Irrigation Administration Magat River Integrated Irrigation System, said NIA has been enforcing irrigation water to 75,000 hectares of rice farms in Cagayan Valley.

The drought has already destroyed more than P1 billion worth of crops in the region, said Andrew Villacorta, Cagayan director of the Department of Agriculture (DA).

In Pangasinan, the DA regional office said the dry spell that is being felt in the province now is not yet the El Niño phenomenon.

"This is a normal dry season," said Celspido Bautista, DA regional technical director. Melvin Navarro, Villamor Monje and Gabriel Cardinoza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

SCORE of the magnificent rice terraces in Ifugao are drying up and may crumble as drought ravages farms in the province.

Whatever happened to some of these key Edsa I players?

From page A1

subdirectory: Bukaneg Pambansa.

By then, she was scheduled to travel to Cebu and Davao as part of preparations for a nationwide strike to coincide with Marcos' swearing-in on Feb. 26.

Almazora was a founder of BAM and was considered its "grandfather."

He was appointed by Marcos to head the Philippine Center for Advanced Studies of the University of the Philippines. The Cheli faith he was married to described as the catalyst of and the timeline for the ideas that led to the formation of RAM by younger Armed Forces officers.

Similar grievances

Almazora was much older than the members of RAM's core group, who graduated from the Philippine Military Academy 13 years after he did. In a story he has become in 2006, he said that in his seemingly endless discussions with the young officers, he became a "repository of their anxieties."

Almazora said they told him of "the PMA classmates they lost, of the deaths of soldiers under their care, and of the peasant youths they had to kill in what they saw as a futile rebellion."

He said he found their grievances similar to what had moved his platoon to mutiny several years back.

Plot aborted

In the planned coup d'etat of RAM, two groups would attack Malacañang and capture Marcos.

Almazora's task, along with Lt. Col. Victor Bukin, was to seat the RAM command post at Nichols Field, where a faction from Fort Bonifacio in Metro would join them.

The coup was aborted when Marcos discovered the plot a day before it was to be launched.

Run like the Red Cross'

After Edsa I, Almazora became the first officer to be promoted to general by Aquino. After he retired from military service, Aquino appointed him head of the Economic Development and Investigation Bureau.

From 1992 to 1998, Almazora was also the chief security adviser of President Fidel Ramos. For his work during the Ramos administration, he was conferred the country's highest award, the Ancient Order of Sikatuna, for outstanding governmental service.

Today, Almazora is on consultancy work and very active in speaking engagements here and abroad. He also writes position papers that focus on leadership, nation-building and peace in Southeast Asia, among others.

"I'm like the Red Cross, always ready to help," he said in an interview.

EDUARDO KAPUNAN
Investigated member of RAM, 82 Ferix Lt. Col. Eduardo "Red" Kapunan was one of the few AFP officers who came out in the open during Enrile's love fathermobile to go against the Marcos dictatorship.

According to the BAM plot, Kapunan and Lt. Col. Rodolfo Aguinaldo would lead a group who would attack the Malacañang Presidential Complex on the south bank of the Pasig River.

Kapunan's group would complement the smaller assault team led by Col. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan, whose mission was to capture Marcos at dawn of Feb. 23.

Last stand

When the plot was uncovered, Kapunan and other RAM members made a last stand on Feb. 22 in Camp Aguinaldo with their Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile. Later that day, their Lt. Gen. Ramos, the AFP vice chief of staff, joined them.

After Edsa I, a faction of the RAM returned to the barracks, the another group was involved in several failed coup attempts against Aquino. Kapunan was among the soldiers who again turned rebels after Edsa I.

Recording to the Davide fact-finding Commission, Kapunan was involved or investigated for his alleged involvement in three coup attempts against Aquino—in November 1986, August 1987 and December 1989.

He was also accused of being involved in the November 1986 killing of labor leader Rolando Olalia and his driver, Leonel Alay-ay.

In May 1998, the police finally filed two cases of murder against Kapunan and 12 Enrile soldiers and RAM members for the deaths of Olalia and Alay-ay.

In March last year, the Supreme Court dismissed the petitions filed by Kapunan and Oscar Leppay, another accused RAM member, who had sought immunity from prosecution based on the general amnesty granted by Ramos. The cases are pending in the Antipolo Regional Trial Court.

Kapunan assumed the post of deputy director general of the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines in July 2008 by virtue of a board resolution.

In last year's rewatch-laying ceremonies marking the 23rd anniversary of Edsa I, President Macapagal-Arroyo said she was happy to have Kapunan and other BAM leaders in government service to help pursue "reforms and good governance."

ANTONIO BONIFACIO
Although he played a major role in the revolt, Col. Antonio Sotelo was not a member of BAM and, initially, was not on the side of the rebels.

On Feb. 22, Day 2 of the uprising, Sotelo, then the commander of the Air force 15th Strike Wing based at Sangley Point, was ordered by Marcos to mobilize the helicopters in the rebel-held Camp Crame.

With no one volunteering to carry out the attack, Sotelo discussed with his men his plan to fight alongside the Enrile-Ramos troops.

On the morning of Feb. 24, he defected by leading a squadron of helicopter gunships to Cramer.

Tide turns

Sotelo's defection came as a major decisive moment, switching just after a Marcos loyalist Manila detachment infiltrated Camp Aguinaldo and set up artillery and mortar across the highway from where the rebel forces were holed up.

Sotelo's action turned the tide in favor of the rebels.

Sotelo was one of the five officers promoted to general by Aquino. He became the Air Force chief in February 1987 and was AFP vice chief of staff with the rank of lieutenant general when he retired in August 1989.

SISTERS MARIBEL CASTELLER, IRENE DECANAY AND EDITH TELAETTE, RSCJ
The three Roman Catholic nuns did not hear the original broadcast of Agapito "Butz" Aquino on Radio Veritas appealing for help. They only heard its replay but still they were among the first to heed the call.

On the night of Feb. 22, Enrile, along with Ramos, held a press conference to announce they had broken away from Marcos and made their last stand in Camp Aguinaldo.

The press conference was aired at 8:45 p.m. that Saturday. Before it ended, Cardinal Jaime Sin and Fidel Ramos appealed for help. They only heard its replay but still they were among the first to heed the call.

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CHR asked to look into case of 'Morong 43'

By Alexis Papa
and Jerry E. Esplanada

THE MARCHES OF THE 43 health workers arrested early this month in Morong, Rizal, have formally reached the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) to look into the continued detention and purported torture of their loved ones at a military camp.

CHR Chief Leila de Lima received the 15-page complaint lodged yesterday by Bonito Capulong and other lawyers of the families.

Capulong said he and the others hoped the commission would follow up their complaint with a request for the transfer of the 43 health workers from Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal, to Camp Crame in Quezon City.

"As long as they are in that camp, this limited investigations will continue and violations issues will be curtailed. If there is a hearing on the matter, we will be there and we will prove there are human rights violations [being committed]," he said.

De Lima said the CHR would issue a directive on Monday to the military and police leadership to "make a verified answer" to the allegations "that have been confirmed by our findings and initial observations."

She said the military and police, as well as the prosecutor handling the cases, would be asked why the health workers were arrested, why they were initially denied their right to counsel, and "why they were still being held in the military camp."

De Lima said the CHR would continue the military's probe and, if necessary, call for a public inquiry where the detainees could be summoned on the strength of the commission's subpoena power.

The 43 health workers, including two physicians, a nurse and a midwife, were arrested on Feb. 6 in a raid on a farm house in Morong where they were engaged in a health training session. They were taken at gunpoint to Camp Capinpin.

The military later said the raiders had found explosives among the health workers' personal effects.

In their complaint, the families called the military raid an "unfounded" the military's claim that the health workers were communist recruiters.

They said the search warrant served to the raiding team was defective and that the subject, one Mario Condez, was nonexistent and was not among those arrested.

Capulong said his fellow lawyers who had the warrant did not specify what that soldiers were looking for.

"The glaring catch is that the real intention of the military and police ... is to link the 43 doctors and medical workers, who are members of progressive organizations, with the CPP/NPA (Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army), harass and threaten them, illegally search the farmhouse, plant pieces of evidence and unlawfully arrest them, using a patently unconstitutionally defective search warrant in order for the raid to have a semblance of regularity [and] presence of legality," the families said.

De Lima said the CHR was able to confirm that from Feb. 8 to Feb. 14, the health workers were subjected to "continuous interrogations, especially at odd hours of the night."

She said the interrogations stopped for a brief period, then resumed on Feb. 18.

"The agenda there is to crush the detainees' spirit in exchange for information," she said.

GMA: What happened to the glory of Edsa? It has gone partisan

From page A1

the ceremony that started at 7:30 a.m. with the singing of the national anthem and the flag-raising ceremony.

The Quezon Symphony Band then began playing classic Filipino songs, at which point the Aquino family, which is Edsa's key player in the 1986 uprising, emerged from the crowd and shared the stage with Ms Arroyo and the other officials.

Ms Arroyo said the 1986 Edsa People Power Revolution should be remembered for the partisanship that came in its wake less for its spirit that promoted the "greatness" of Filipinos in the world.

"People Power is not partisan. It is not about whose politics one supports. It's about the heroism of the many who held strongly to their faith in the Filipino and who have taught a new Philippines that stands proudly beside anyone nation in the world," she said.

Ms Arroyo said Edsa I is considered many people worldwide to "stand up for their own freedom."

"The world embraced Edsa I in 1986. The world celebrated Edsa II in 2001. The world will not forgive an Edsa III but would instead condemn the Philippines as a nation of corrupt political system a hopelessly unstable," she said.

Then the Vice President, Ms Arroyo was catapulted to power in January 2001 on another military-backed revolt that ousted President Joseph Estrada on charges of corruption, incompetence and inefficiency. It came to be known as Edsa II.

In May 2001, followers of Estrada stormed Malacañang in a violent but ultimately unsuccessful attempt to unseat Ms Arroyo — an event that would later be proposed leader like to call "Edsa III."

Ms Arroyo said her administration had partly succeeded in accomplishing its goal of bringing disparate sectors together in the aftermath of People Power.

"Edsa I and Edsa II showed that one of our goals is to heal the wounds of Edsa. We've achieved this to some extent," Ms Arroyo said.

"Most of those who used street to express their opposition have had a change of heart and are now working with mainstream society to fast-track our growth," she said in reference to some of the rebel military officers involved in the July 2003 Oakwood mutiny.

"So prepared for the day of reckoning. Wake up in the truth. The people have awakened," said Aquino, son of the late democracy icon and former Philippine First Lady Corazon, on the prime movers of Edsa I.

Ben Aquino noted that compared to their courageous forebears, Mr. Aquino and Ms Arroyo "have not done anything."

"If true leaders of this country succeed in their courageous forebears, they were called 'Lutong Gloria at Gani,'" he said, referring to the late Imelda Marcos.

But as the TV program was switching down, a "flash mobout" organized by the camp of Nacionalista Party standard bearer Sen. Manny Villar was just warming up at the SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City.

The flash mob/party counted a show dubbed "Wanseaville Mass Pandaigdigan—Kampeon Para sa Bayan (Concert for the People)."

Hosted by Imelda Villar supporter and gamu show host Willie Revillame, the show drew some 10,000 spectators as of 9 last night, many sporting orange, Villar's campaign color.

Among the VIPs in attendance were NP candidates Jejomar Binay, Nancy Binay and Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. Maria Cel. Imee Querubin was represented by mother Martha Leon.

The Villar camp also planned to make an appearance to award scholarships, the Inquirer learned at press time.

Aquino also shared a piece of advice which he said he got from his father, the martyred late Senator "Ninoy" Aquino Jr.

"Live with honor and follow your conscience. There is no greater satisfaction than doing your duty to God and Motherland. So greater people than our own. Serve them with all your heart, with all your might and with all you strength. Now, the ball is now in your hands," Aquino said in his closing remarks.

After greeting the affair was Aquino's running mate Bise Binay, girlfriend Shalani Soledad, Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim, Quezon City Mayor Sonny Belmonte, former Manila Mayor Mel Lopez, and former Interior Secretary Avelino Cruz.

The LP program had its own share of show biz performers like Dingdong Dantes, Jim Paredes, Christian Bautista and Dyan Alcuaz. Jaya outside Aquino's hands played on a makeshift stage for the hundreds who would not get in.

A fireworks display over the Cultura commercial complex capped the evening's celebrations.

Aquino, Villar rock to People Power politics at concert-rallies

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Cheered by a crowd singing Filipino pop tunes, Liberal Party presidential candidate Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III shared the stage with Ms Arroyo at the 25th anniversary of the 1986 People Power Revolution at the historic Cubao intersection in Cubao, Quezon City, promising to right the wrongs of the Arroyo presidency.

He said the brown administration could not claim credit for the people power uprising, yet it ended up in many ways worse than the Marcos dictatorship which the 1986 revolt had toppled.

Querubin backs Loren a day after Mar got Magdalo

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Querubin, a recipient of the Medal of Valor, spoke through his stepson Martin Leon on the eve of the fourth anniversary of the standoff. Querubin is facing attempted murder charges before a special protocol court-martial and is barred from associating with members of the media.)

Leon described in reporters in Camp Aguinaldo his father's endorsement of Legarda's candidacy as akin to "a brave man supporting a brave woman's battle" to make more room for young women, children, the youth, poor and marginalized, and the environment as a campaign platform.

Querubin's endorsement is important to Legarda's candidacy because it came a day after the president Magdalo group led by detained Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV endorsed the candidacy of NP standard bearer Sen. Manuel Villar.

Her turnout of backing Villar's running mate Legarda, the Magdalo chose to endorse Sen. Mar Roxas, the running mate of Liberal Party standard bearer Sen. Benigno Aquino III.

Earlier yesterday, Legarda, a reserve officer in the Air Force, cited the navy's contribution of the military's support.

"I believe that individually, they will give their support [to me]," she told reporters, following a meeting with Querubin at the custodial center in Quezon City.

"During the 8th, 26 standoff four years ago, who was with them?" she said.

Support when needed

Indeed, Leon said his father was fully supportive of Legarda because she was with him the late President Corazon Aquino when Querubin called for storm bolter to protect the soldiers during the 2006 standoff.

"When was Mar? Tita Loren was with us. She showed her support for Daddy in 2006 when he needed it. She was very brave when she showed up at Fort Bonifacio," said Leon, 21, who has taken a leave from his law studies at the University of the Philippines to campaign for Querubin.

"I'd like to reiterate [Colonel Querubin's support for the whole NP slate, especially the candidates for president and vice president," he said, adding.

"Definitely, Colonel Querubin and all of his supporters in the military will give their all-out support to Sen. Loren Legarda for vice president in 2010. We saw her sincerity in helping the military, in wanting reform in the Armed Forces."

"And we will repay her with unwavering support. We saw her initiatives in peace and institution, in peace negotiations. We really want her to win as vice president so she can help from the Senate," he said.

Leon said Querubin's endorsement of Legarda was based on the senator's track record in the Senate.

"The first who [she] vowed to fight the constitutional authority, many of them are now settling their own plate in the political system, playing favourites under the rule of the Constitution," she added, referring to the alleged military officers Danilo Lim and Ariel Querubin who are running for Senate seats in the May elections.

"Peaceful revolution is a hallmark of the Filipino's struggle. It's also our guide now as we wage peace with our countrymen — against poverty, against hunger, against ignorance. People Power is the course that we will use to save this war," she said.

Another of Edsa's earthbound hero and Silver Plains former Governor Rodolfo Plaza, meanwhile, for the anniversary celebration.

In an ecumenical prayer, four religious leaders called on all candidates in the May elections to be inspired to work for the country whether they win or lose.

And as with all Edsa anniversary celebrations, yellow confetti was scattered around the People Power Monument.

But the mood away from the anniversary celebrations since July 2000, the height of the "Hello Garci" election fraud scandal, when Cory Aquino told the country loudly and clearly that Ms Arroyo should not be allowed to finish her term.

In 2007, Ms Arroyo marked the anniversary by laying wreaths at the Libingan ng mga Bayani in Fort Bonifacio.

Last year, she chose to attend a joke fair at the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration just across the street from the Edsa Shrine.

In 2006, the commemoration was canceled after Ms Arroyo declared a state of emergency following the alleged coup plot planned for the eve of the Edsa I anniversary.

Danilo Lim, one of the leaders of the violent coup attempt against then President Aquino in 1989, was on hand last coup to in a protest march on Feb. 24, 2006, in what was reportedly called a "withdrawal of support" from Ms Arroyo.

He was sacked as commander of the Army's elite First Scout Ranger.

He is detained at Camp Crame and is running for senator as a guest candidate of the Liberal Party (LP).

Interviewed at the People Power Monument, Mayor Belmonte said the legacy of Edsa I was enduring despite the passing of its most popular icons, Cory Aquino and Cardinal Sin.

"The courage of Filipinos who were there at Edsa was never gone. That was the moment that signaled an important part of our nation's history," he said.

Belmonte was president of the Government Service and Insurance System during the administration of Aquino, who died in August 2009.

He was recently sworn in as an LP member and is making its representative Quezon City in the House.

Asked if he thought Edsa I had lost its relevance after 24 years, Belmonte said, "Edsa lives on. It doesn't die because more events than the ranks of ordinary people pour that the Edsa spirit is alive."

He said that even with his and Aquino gone, democratic processes were alive and well.

"Nanotchelan, it's good that we are reminded that we have that our democratic moments in our nation's history," he said.

In Manila, officials and employees held wreaths at the monuments of Aquino and her husband, the martyred Senator Ninoy Aquino Jr.

"We can not forget the sacrifices and struggles in order for us to have the democracy we were enjoy," Mayor Alfredo Lim said in a speech.

Bala Lapu, a nephew of the late Aquino, represented the family, particularly LP standard-bearer Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, at the event.

Lim called on those who witnessed Edsa I to remember how Ninoy offered the life for the country and how Cory and her children suffered during his incarceration by the Marcos regime.

He urged the youth to learn their history by heart and to not forget the heroes of democracy.

Lapu said the Aquino family recognized that without the love of country showed by ordinary people, Edsa I would not have happened.

According to Lapu, Senator Aquino did not originally intend to seek the presidency except that his mother's death cry, forced a change for him to carry on the legacy of his parents.

Lapu also said the massive public support for Noynoy also stemmed support for the country's change for the better. With reports from Ador III, Amanda and Tracy L. Sinsua

Querubin backs Loren a day after Mar got Magdalo

Querubin, fully understands the situation, according to Villar.

"He wants to get out, but he knows it's not that easy," the senator said, adding that the AFP being an apparatus party could not promise anything.

He said the whole slate had to visit Querubin to prove that the party was behind the latter's humanitarian efforts.

Leon said his father was seeking only a lawyer, so as he allowed to post bail.

"We've seen that certain candidate similarly situated now and in the past never given the privilege," he said, referring to the media, and campaign to the public. We're hoping that Colonel Querubin would also be given the same privilege and right," he said.

Querubin's wife, Martha, pleaded for his case, invoking equal protection of the laws.

Petition for habeas corpus

She said Querubin was facing a "political case," and that the government wanted "to keep him at bay."

AFP spokesman Tarucan, a lawyer, said the party would ask the court to allow Querubin to grant media interviews and would "leave the a problem for habeas corpus.

"We can only say him, but he said talk. This a test how you treat soldiers. This guy is a hero. He's one of the most distinguished, decorated soldiers that we have," Tarucan said. With a report from Alcuin Papa

Another Abu leader falls

By Alcuin Papa

A MEMBER OF THE ABU SAYYAF GROUP involved in at least three high-profile kidnappings, including the 2000 Sipadan abduction of 19 foreigners, was arrested in Indonesia by several police authorities said yesterday.

Mukhtar Alih Amsor, 26, was arrested in a raid on his hideout in the village of Unimed Quee, Serangan Bontan, Indonesia.

Director General Jesus Verzosa, the Philippine National Police chief, said the arrest was made possible by vital information provided by a strategic informant who was given the P800,000 bounty yesterday.

Verzosa said Amsor was the logistics officer of the ASG group in Sulu headed by Sacbalan Sahiron.

"He asserts a steward of P600,000 because of his involvement not only in a string of kidnappings but also in bombing activities in the past," said Verzosa.

Amsor, who uses the aliases Songhang, Hamdi, Bapping and Agong, is also an active member of the ASG's urban terrorist group, he said.

It was the third important success for police authorities in a week against the Abu Sayyaf which has been blamed for the nation's worst terrorist attacks.

Police officials said Amsor's arrest was announced only yesterday so as not to jeopardize

APHOH is custody

follow-up operations.

The announcement came just four days after the military killed one of the Abu Sayyaf's top leaders, Albader Parad, and five of his men on Jolo island on Tuesday.

Verzosa said that at the time of his arrest, Amsor had a standing arrest warrant for six counts of kidnapping and actions illegal detention with torture.

According to police, Amsor began his Abu Sayyaf career as a teenager when he joined the Abu Sayyaf in a cross-border kidnapping raid on the Malaysian resort island of Sipadan in 2000, in which they grabbed 19 foreigners and two Philippine hostages.

The hostages were rumoured off for millions of dollars and subsequently freed one after the other after months in captivity.

Police officials earlier announced that another Abu Sayyaf suspect who operated the boat used for the Sipadan hostage raid had been arrested last week in Manila while he was on a mission to buy bullets for the group.

Amsor was also allegedly involved in the kidnapping of American Jeffrey Schilling in August 2000, and the killing of two Army soldiers in Parang, Sulu, in 2003. Schilling was later freed allegedly after an unspecified ransom payment.

Amsor was also identified as the one who received the P500,000 ransom for the release of Eberlyn Chu who was kidnapped and held hostage in the camp of Sacbalan Sahiron in Patikul, Sulu, in October 2001.

He was also allegedly involved in the kidnapping of six members of the Jehovah's Witnesses and three Muslim guide in Patikul, Sulu, on Aug. 20, 2002. Two of the six kidnap victims were later beheaded by the ASG.

Amsor is also said to be responsible for an explosion at Airport Road in Jolo, Sulu, on Dec. 5, 2003 in which two members of the military's bomb squad were killed, with AFP

Science scholarships for Taiwan OFWs' kin

By Cynthia D. Balana

A NEW SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FOR deserving family members of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in Taiwan who wish to enroll in science and technology college courses has been launched recently by the Manila Economic and Cultural Office (Meco).

The new scholarship program, in partnership with the Department of Science and Technology Science Education Institute (DOST-SEI), expands Meco's educational development thrust by giving 13 full scholarships yearly to deserving dependents of present or former OFWs in Taiwan.

Meco chair Teresa S. Almeroso said the new Meco program will help boost the country's capabilities in the crucial science and technology sector to produce more scientists, engineers, physicists and other S&T professionals upon the doctorate level.

"This program will enable the families of our Taiwanese OFWs to giving their deserving members a college education that provides a positive impact measured in generations," Almeroso said.

Meco is currently involved in tie-ups with Taiwanese agencies to aiding Philippine schools and in giving deserving Filipinos the opportunity to study in Taiwan.

"The new Meco scholarship program gives direct aid to the families of our present and former OFWs in Taiwan, and should help build up the country's capability in the crucial science and technology sector," Almeroso said.

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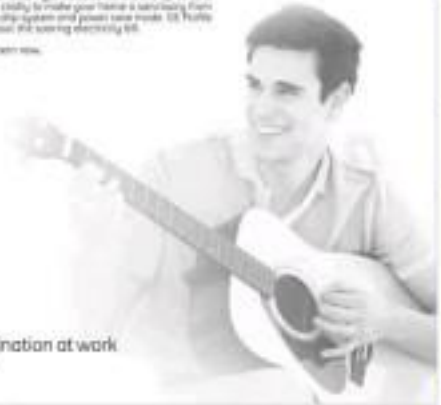

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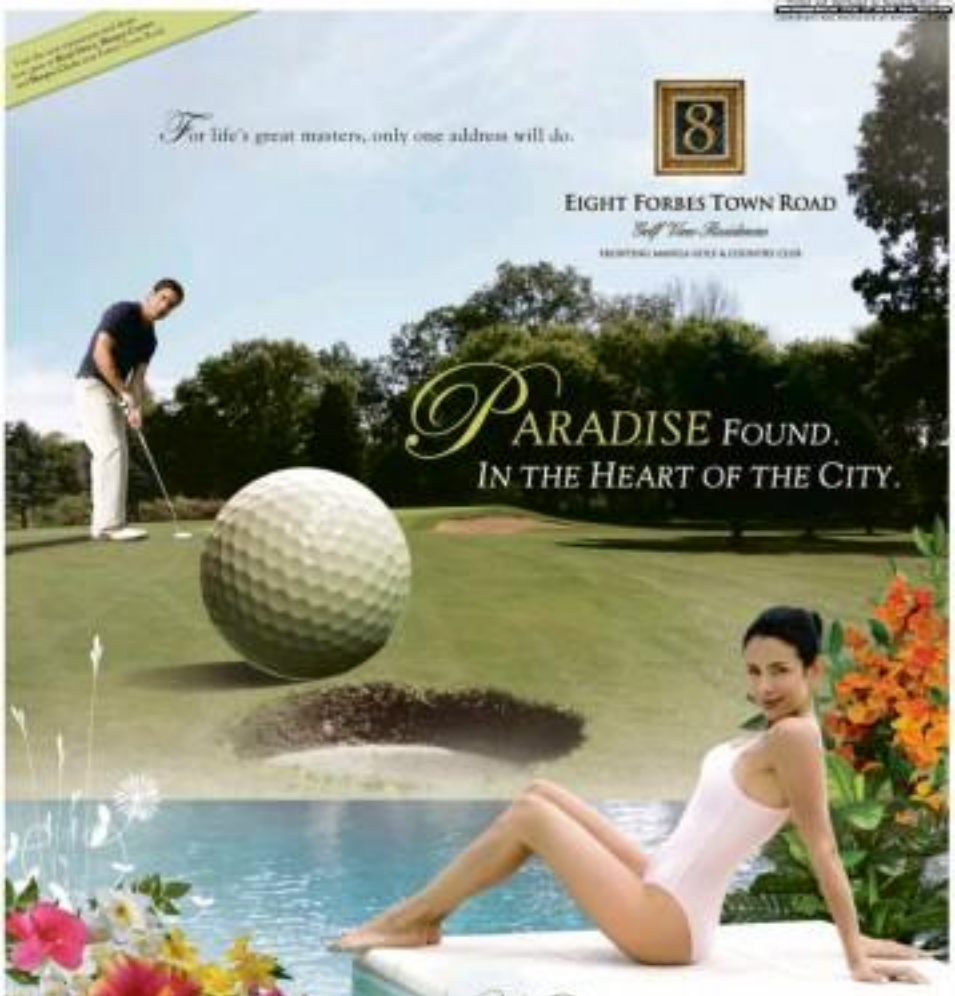

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Aplus METRO
Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

DID YOU KNOW

OF THE 142 Quezon City barangays in 2007, Commonwealth had the largest population (172,934 or 6.5 percent share), followed by Bahay Toro (145,826 or 5.5 percent), and Payatas (111,005 or 4.2 percent).
Cyril C. Bonoan/Inquirer Research

BoC seizes ₱54-M misdeclared items

Shipment of TV accessories, yarn found to contain plasma, LCD TV sets

By Roxanne W. Domingo

BUREAU OF CUSTOMS AGENTS HAVE SEIZED 12 cargo containers filled with ₱54 million worth of misdeclared items ranging from high-end electronic products to nuts and frozen chicken.

The shipments were consigned at three area freight forwarders in the Port of Manila and Manila International Container Port (MICP), Customs Commissioner Napoleon L. Morales told reporters yesterday.

However, he did not say where the cargoes were seized.

The biggest among the haul was a 40-foot container filled with plasma and LCD television sets, cameras, Sony PlayStation (PSPs), Sony PlayStation3 cordless controllers, computer processors, Panasonic integrated telephone system, DVC DVD recorders with monitors and other high-end electronic gadgets.

The value of the cargo was estimated at ₱50 million. It had been declared to contain 1,217 packages of television accessories, DVD players and plug-outs.

In addition, seven 20-foot containers were found filled with fish estimated at a total of ₱4 million inclusive of 5,000 cartons of Pacific mackerel.

Both shipments—the cargo of high-end electronic equipment and fish—from Singapore were consigned to Quick Fit Trading.

Morales said they have put out an alert for the consignee's other shipments while customs personnel who handled the cargoes have been placed under investigation.

"We have to investigate our own men to weed out those who are colluding with these importers to cheat the government," he said.

Also seized were four 40-foot containers of frozen chicken leg quarters which arrived at the North Harbor from the United States.

The shipment, consigned to Regency Marketing Corp., had been declared as 6,512 cases of frozen chicken leg quarters and sliced potatoes.

Makati City gov't lets go of contractual workers as vice mayor cries foul

By Mike Navales

FOR EIGHT YEARS, RUDDIES Diaz, Eduardo Montero, Edna Ellenhorn Jr., Edgardo Gellina, Nestican Rivera and Gerissa Bernardino—collectively known as the Makati Anti-Drug Abuse Council (MADAC) office in Team Alpha—worked side by side at the forefront of the city government's war against drugs.

But when they woke up yesterday morning, they found themselves unemployed.

"It's as if one of my body parts was severed," Gellina told the reporters, as his companions nodded in agreement. "This is, indeed, a great loss."

Words sent, along with scores of casual employees, were left hidden yesterday after the Makati City government decided not to renew their contracts which expired on Dec. 31 last year.

CONTRACTUAL employees hold a rally near Makati City Hall to protest the loss of their jobs.

Disputes over figure

However, there was a dispute as to the exact number of affected workers.

Vice Mayor Ernesto Mercado claimed that nearly 1,000 casuals have been jobless while acting Makati City administrator Ifrahim de Reyes placed the figure at 200.

Affected were four agencies—two of them under his supervision, according to Mercado—namely, the Office of the Vice Mayor; Madac, the Makati Justice Center and Office of the Barangay-along Kabataan.

De Reyes, meanwhile, explained that the personnel displacement had been conducting an audit of contractual employees assigned to different agencies.

When some of the workers could not be accounted for, it was decided that their contracts would not be renewed, she said.

"Casual employees don't have security of tenure," De Reyes explained.

Unfazed by the data, Mercado explained to reporters that he had assigned some of the casual employees under his supervision to other offices which were understaffed.

"That's why most of them were to the field," he said.

But according to De Reyes, Mercado should have informed the personnel department beforehand of the movements.

Madac chief Antonio Montaje Jr. meanwhile, lamented the loss of 'life insurance' he would find it hard to replace Diaz, Montero, Ellenhorn, Gellina, Rivera and Bernardino who had been deputized by the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency to go after drug suspects.

"We can't just hire new people because they have to go through another round of accreditation and a licensing process that takes a lot of time," the official said. "If they can't work for us, in effect our operations will be paralyzed."

Montaje also pointed out that with their frontline personnel gone, the drug syndicates they had busted might get back at them.

"It just hurts me [to be fired]," the official, a born-again Christian, said.

Some of the contractual employees and Mercado's supporters led a rally on E. Rodriguez Street near the Makati City Hall to protest the loss of jobs.

Four other coffins were later brought in to symbolize the four affected departments.

Monsour Cedeo, a Madac psychologist, narrated that she and her husband, Jojo, had met at work when they both started as casual employees.

With both of them out of work, she said they, along with their children, would have to depend on the small business they started seven months ago for their source of income.

Rosario Agudelo, who had been a casual employee for the city government for the past 17 years, also expressed his concern about his and his family's future.

"I kept on working as a contractual employee because what's important to me is I have a job and a salary to provide for my family," he said.

TOP WELCOMES 2010 WITH 100TH STORE OPENING
The Generics Pharmacy, the country's first and leading chain of drugstores offering quality generic medicines, began the year strong with the recent opening of its 100th franchise store outlet. Located on SLF Commercial Center in Tagbilaran City, the new store opening was witnessed by Southern Philippines Vice President of TGP Franchising Corp., and store franchisee Richard Tan Quan. Don't miss out on huge fun with our staff. With more than 40 years of experience and proven leadership in the local pharmaceutical industry, The Generics Pharmacy is distinguished as the first generics retail pharmacy to successfully franchise outlets in numerous parts of the country. Supporting our store's target of opening 500 stores by 2012, we offer a complete franchise package through aggressive expansion plans and consistent offering of more than 300 high-grade, low-cost medicines for both common and serious ailments, antibiotics, vitamins and food supplements. It is also sustaining its unique customer services such as free clinical consultations to optimize safety, free deliveries and 20 percent subsidy discount to senior citizen cards. TGP offers low-priced equivalent medicines, like ketoconazole fungicidal 2mg tab, a medication for hypertension, for only ₱9.00 per dose) against the leading brand at ₱22. For inquiries, call 424-2727, 424-0000, 372-8888 loc 65, e-mail tgpmarketing@thegenericspharmacy.com, or visit www.thegenericspharmacy.com

Ivler to undergo operation on Monday

By Julie Pi-Aurelio

ROAD RAGE SUSPECT JASON Ivler will undergo an operation on Monday to close a gaping wound as the judge hearing his case ordered a Quezon Memorial Medical Center (QMMC) doctor to submit daily updates on his condition.

Thus, Judge Alexander Balut of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 76 said, would help him determine whether or not Ivler was fit to be discharged from the hospital and detained at the city jail.

Ivler's attending physician, Dr. Renato Abaya, even showed the court the wound on Ivler's abdomen which was covered by pieces of gauze.

Abaya took the stand during yesterday's preliminary conference on Ivler's case to testify on the suspect's medical condition.

"Our problem now is the open wound and the point of exit, because there's tissue loss and infection. We have controlled the infection by letting the wound heal and not closing it," Abaya told the court.

He added that Ivler, who was being treated for two gunshot wounds he sustained in a shoot-out with National Bureau of Investigation agents last month, could now sit up and take a bath, as well as eat solid food.

In an interview with reporters outside the courtroom, Abaya noted that Ivler can even play video games and seem to a better condition.

He also described the suspect's wound as "not that deep" and as "superficial," adding that the lacerated organs were not exposed anymore.

After his operation, Ivler will take 10 to 14 days to recover, the doctor added.

Ivler's lawyer, Abram Mendoza, earlier told reporters that he had filed a motion for Ivler's appearance in court.

The suspect has been charged with murder for allegedly killing Renato "Rebot" Bondoc Jr., the son of a Makati mayoralty official, during a traffic altercation on Nov. 29 in Quezon City.

Bondoc sustained two mortal wounds after Ivler allegedly cocked his service .45 pistol and fired at the victim's head.

Ivler was arrested two months later when NBI agents raided his mother's house to serve a warrant for his arrest.

Medina said they sought the motion as Ivler has not yet fully recovered from his wounds.

MERCURY DRUG - OPERATION BIGAY LUNAS 2010

On March 1, 2010, Mercury Drug will celebrate its 69th anniversary by conducting "OPERATION BIGAY LUNAS" (OBL) in 60 cities and municipalities nationwide. The OBL, now on its 12th year, is an annual , one-day free medical services and health consultations which aims to serve more than 100,000 patients this year. Free medicines will be distributed among patients.This undertaking will be made possible through the cooperation of Mercury Drug's business partners, provincial governors,city and municipal mayors, doctors, nurses,Local Government Units (LGU's) and other volunteers. This is one way of thanking its customers for their continuous patronage.

The "OPERATION BIGAY LUNAS" is part of Mercury Drug's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to improve the quality of healthcare in the community.

Don't swim in Manila Bay, official asks public

By Tina G. Santos

CITING HEALTH HAZARDS, the Manila City government yesterday reminded the public to refrain from swimming in Manila Bay.

Carlos Bulaong, head of the city's Department of Public Services, said signs warning people against bathing in the waters of the bay have already been put up in the area.

"You can't argue (about not going in the polluted bay anymore), it's for your own health," he said, referring to residents who ignore the warning signs in their need to seek respite from the sweltering heat.

"I guess we will have to put up bigger signs, including details about diseases they may acquire from bathing there," he added.

"The bay is polluted with hazardous chemicals that endanger people's health," he pointed out, adding that instead of trash are collected from its waters daily. "People can get skin diseases, dysentery, typhoid fever, viral and bacterial gastroenteritis, among others, by swimming in the dirty waters."

Bulaong said that instead of going to the polluted bay, residents may use for free the swimming pools at the Amoranto Children Recreation Center in Quezon City's sports center in Lagusnilad, Tondo, Intramuros and Pandacan.

CHILDREN play games while swimming in the bay waters at the Amoranto Sports Complex. They might get sick from swimming in its polluted waters.

Woman kills attacker with homemade spear in Tondo

By Jeannette I. Andrade

A 45-YEAR-OLD WOMAN WHO reportedly stabbed and killed her neighbor with a spear after he allegedly attacked her last week was arrested by police yesterday.

Manila Police District (MPD) operatives nabbed Rose Morales, of Sitio Damayan, Villar in Tondo, after Rolando Cotia's flesh-wound died three days after sustaining treatment in the hospital after he was pierced in the chest with a homemade spear.

Although Morales claimed self-defense, she was turned over to the MPD homicide section.

SPO2 Richard Lumbad, case investigator, said that before the incident that took place around 9:30 p.m. on Feb. 22, Morales was outside her house when Cotia passed by and allegedly mocked her breast.

Cotia reportedly left after being scolded by the victim, but returned minutes later armed with a spear.

A heated argument ensued, with Cotia allegedly attacking Morales.

But she was able to grab the weapon from Cotia and used it to stab her attacker.

Neighbors immediately brought the wounded man to the nearest hospital where he died the following day.

Morales was arrested immediately by policemen from MPD Station 1, which the lodged a complaint against Cotia earlier for acts of lasciviousness.

Cop nabbed for withdrawing stolen check from bank account

By Nancy C. Carvajal

A POLICEMAN, TOGETHER with three other persons, were arrested inside a bank in Quezon City yesterday when they tried to withdraw money from an account where a stolen check was deposited.

Chief Insp. Wilfredo Allanes, chief of the theft and robbery investigation section of the Quezon City Police District (QCPD) identified those arrested as PO2 Joseito Villagracia, Maggie Ocella, Jenny La Serra, and Salvador Sanchez.

The suspects were arrested on Wednesday afternoon at the Banco de Oro branch on Maginhawa Street in Barangay Central.

Allanes said the four tried to withdraw P300,000 from the account of Bernard Collardo when a P1.3 million check of MCA Home Licensing Corporation that was reported stolen was deposited.

The suspects had presented an authentication letter supposedly from Collardo allowing Villagracia to withdraw the money.

The bank management then called the police on the basis of a notice of a freeze order after an investigation showed that the same check was deposited to Collardo's account.

The four suspects were held by bank security until police arrived to arrest them.

Allanes said they are sure looking for Collardo, who is allegedly a police officer.

The corporate secretary of MCH Lawyer Penelope Madrigal, told police that the company had no transactions with Collardo, and does not know him.

The same source they suspect managed to get hold of a blank check from the company when done the amount, then deposited it in the bank," the lawyer told police. The check was reported stolen early this month.

He said that their company's bank, Union Bank, only issued a check for P1.3 million had been deposited in Collardo's BDO account in Quezon City.

QC vice mayor, brother given deadline to answer theft charges

By Julie H. Aurelio

THE QUEZON CITY PROSECutor's Office gave Vice Mayor Herbert Bautista until his birthday or until next week to answer a complaint accusing them of estafa and qualified theft.

In a preliminary investigation of the complaint filed yesterday by Carlos de Leon, Assistant City Prosecutor Joselito Bacolor gave the Bautista brothers until March 5 to submit their counter affidavit.

Herbert and Reno Bautista were supposed to file their reply to De Leon's allegations yesterday but Bautista told De Leon's lawyer that the Bautistas filed a motion to postpone the hearing.

"We were told that the respondents filed a motion to reset the hearing, so Bacolor gave them until March 5 to reply with a warning that with or without their counter affidavit, the complaint will be deemed submitted for resolution," said Oliver Yuan, De Leon's counsel.

The Bautista brothers were accused of stealing a typewriting printing machine worth P1.2 million from De Leon's printing office last year.

De Leon, also a former child actor and a friend of the Bautistas, and proprietor of OSAM Advertising on Shaw Boulevard in Project 8, filed the complaint against the brothers for qualified theft and estafa on Jan. 5.

The Bautistas along with six others identified as Jeff, Pacquino, Papa Boy, Rochelo, Shah and Bobby allegedly took one PV R1001 IE Plus Infiniti Printer from De Leon's office.

"From what I understand, the Bautistas will submit their counter affidavits together. It will be their last opportunity to do so on March 5," Yuan said.

He called on the Bautistas' brothers to answer the allegations against them for the complaint he submitted for months but without their reply.

In a text message, the Quezon City vice mayor told reporters that he was indisposed the hearing was postponed.

WIND POWER Two boys are silhouetted against the afternoon sky as they fly their made of plastic bags and twigs they picked up in a dump in Tondo, Manila.

Ivler ...

From page A11

"The defense is not seeking special treatment, but we are only asking that he be allowed to fully recover and be healthy enough to stand trial," he explained.

Medina added that they were still preparing a petition for Ivler to be allowed to post bail.

Ivler came in the courthouse yesterday lying on a stretcher and his left ankle cuffed to the frame. He was accompanied by his mother, Marlene Aguilar.

He left the QMMC at around 1:40 p.m. with an escort of NBI agents and police men.

Once QMMC doctors accompanied him to the 2 p.m. hearing at the Quezon City Hall of Justice.

Prosecutors lawyer Ramon Montano, however, insisted that Ivler's presence was required even during the preliminary conferences as he said both the accused and his counsel were required to sign the minutes of the proceedings.

But Medina said such a move would deprive Ivler of his constitutional right, adding that his client was not even well enough to discuss his defense with his lawyers.

Judge Dano decided to have Abary testify on Ivler's medical condition. At one point, Abary showed the court Ivler's injuries on his abdomen which were covered by pieces of gauze.

Abary, however, clarified that even though the wound was no longer deep, it would still need constant care for it to heal completely.

"For us, if he were just an ordinary person, he'd be sent home. But we don't know where he will be brought... to jail or what, unlike in house where he can get wound care," he explained.

With Nancy C. Carvajal

MetroBriefs

Japanese loses cash, valuables to con man

A JAPANESE tourist lost P75,000 in cash, a digital camera, and his passport on Wednesday night to a Korean who befriended him, Ataushi Suzuki, 38, a native of Nagoya, Japan, who was temporarily staying at the Star Gate Pension House in Ermita, filed a complaint with the Manila Police District's General Assignment Section against a fellow tourist who had introduced himself only as Kim. Case investigator PO2 James Perez said the theft took place at around 8:30 p.m. on Wednesday the dining room at Isetan Department Store at the corner of C. M. Recto Avenue and Quezon Boulevard in Quiapo, Manila. Suzuki said he was shopping by himself at Robinson's Place on Pedro Gil Street, Ermita, when a Korean-looking man approached him and offered to take him around the city. The victim agreed and they both rode on the Light Rail Transit to go to Isetan. Perez said that upon arriving at the mall, the victim had a few beers with Kim before they went to the clothing section to buy clothes. The victim said he gave Kim his bag to hold but when he came out of the dressing room, the Korean was already gone. The victim said he lost P75,000 in cash, a digital camera, credit cards, a P7000 prepaid mobile phone load and his passport. Jeannette I. Andrade

3 men nabbed for trying to stop demolition

THREE people were arrested by policemen when a scuffle broke out between residents of a riverside community in Sta. Lucia, Pasig, and shanties owned by Boni Serrano's brother-in-law in the area, Senior Supt. Jaime Cariaga, Pasig police chief, said in an interview that they were there to stop city government employees who were trying to implement a resettlement project in Barangka-Sta. Lucia at noon yesterday. The three have yet to be identified. According to Cardona, one of the three men was taken to Pasig City General Hospital for minor injuries. Cardona said the city engineering department had asked the police for help in implementing Executive Order 954 which provides for the rehabilitation of the Supreme Channel, Mangahan-Rosario and Lupang Arenda. The project included several clearing operations in the area and the eventual relocation of residents to Laguna, he added. The residents involved in the scuffle live in a riverside community on the Mangahan Floodway. Beverly T. Ramotad

Woman dies in Pasig fire

A 57-YR.-OLD retired elderly woman died when her house in San Joaquin, Pasig City, was hit by a fire yesterday morning. The fire broke out at the victim's house on San Bernardo Street in Barangay San Joaquin. FO1 Salvador Barrientos of the Bureau of Fire Protection office in Pasig said the fire started from an unattended lighted candle. It damaged only half of the shanty, he said, but the smoke may have suffocated the woman known only as Inday and estimated to be around 50 to 55 years old. Beverly T. Ramotad

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Quirez

Dubai: 15 more suspects in Hamas hit

Son of Hamas founder spied for Israelis, says report

HAMAS co-founder Sheikh Hassan Yousef in 2006 photo. An almost lost lover made public.

JERUSALEM—THE SON OF a Hamas founder was a key mole for Israeli intelligence inside the Islamist movement, helping thwart dozens of attacks, an Israeli newspaper reported on Wednesday.

Mosab Hassan Yousef, 31, the son of Sheikh Hassan Yousef was codenamed "The Green Prince" by his handlers in the Shin Bet internal security agency, according to the Haaretz daily.

The article was based on extracts of a book, "Son of Hamas", co-written by Yousef, who converted to Christianity 10 years ago and now lives in California. The book is set to be published in the US next week.

The revelations, if true, are a further blow to Hamas, and its military militant wing. They follow accusations that an informer within the group aided the killing of a top Hamas operative in Dubai, an assassination widely blamed on Israel's Mossad but for which no one has been charged.

Yousef's father denied he could have had any access to sensitive information.

However, the article said he was once revealed in the arrests of Ibrahim Hamid, once the movement's military chief in the West Bank, and Abdullah Barghuti, the bomb maker behind at least fifty-six suicide attacks in a Mexico restaurant to Jerusalem.

He also said he had even played a role in the arrest of Marwan Barghuti, a senior Fatah leader considered the architect of the 2000 intifada, or uprising. The two Barghutis are not closely related. AFP

DUBAI—DUBAI POLICE ON WEDNESDAY released their search for the killers of top Hamas militant in a luxury hotel, saying 15 more Western passport holders are suspects, bringing the total now to eight to go.

Six of the latest suspects entered over the January 20 killing of Mahmud al-Mabhuh held passports from Britain, three from France, three from Ireland and the remaining three from Australia. Five women were among the 11 new names.

Australia expressed its Israeli ambassador on Wednesday to explain how three Australian passports were used by the latest suspected killers, as Prime Minister Kevin Rudd vowed he would "not be silent on the matter."

The killing had already caused diplomatic tensions between Israel and four European countries—Britain, Ireland, France and Germany—whose fake passports were used to finally kill Mabhuh.

The government has already accused Israel of being behind Mabhuh's murder but Dubai police chief Dahi Khalfan has said it is "most likely" the Israeli intelligence service Mossad was behind the crime.

"The new list of suspects includes people who offered prior logistical support and preparations to facilitate the crime, and others who played a covered role," a police statement said.

Police said their were not ruling out the possibility that more people were involved as they were "still conducting a wide search and reviewing other leads in the case."

All the new suspects but one used credit cards issued by HSBC Bank in the United Arab Emirates, while one used a debit card issued by Britain's Royal Bank of Scotland, police said, adding that they came to Dubai from six different European cities and Hong Kong.

In Israel, meanwhile, media said as many as 10 of the new suspects had used the identities of locally holding double nationalities. Six Israelis with dual British citizenship have already been identified as suspects.

Dubai police initially released the names and photos of 11 suspects who had crossed the UAE on European passports—five six from Britain, three from Ireland, one from Germany and one from France.

The emirate's police chief, Lieutenant General Dahi Khalfan, said last week that none of Mabhuh's killers used diplomatic passports.

"These passports appear to have been falsified or stolen, and belonged to what appear to be ordinary citizens decided to leave of their being linked to the case. AFP

IDENTITY photographs released by the Dubai police on Feb. 24 of the 15 new suspects linked to the killing in the residence of top Hamas militant Mahmoud al-Mabhuh. AFP/AGENCE

System used by US misses more than half of illegal workers

WASHINGTON—THE SYSTEM Congress and the Obama administration want employers to use to help curb illegal immigration is failing to catch more than half the number of unauthorized workers it checks, a government report has found.

The system used E-Verify now used voluntarily by employers, wrongly clears illegal workers about 54 percent of the time, according to Westat, a research company that evaluated the system for the Homeland Security Department. E-Verify ushered so many illegal workers mainly because it can't detect identity fraud, Westat said.

"Clearly it means it's not doing it's No. 1 job well enough," said Mark Rosenblum, a research manager for Westat, a Rockville, Md., institute, a nonpartisan, Washington think tank.

E-Verify allows employers to run a worker's information against Homeland Security and Social Security databases to check whether they are permitted to work in the US. The Obama administration has made cracking down on employers who hire people from illegally a central part of its immigration enforcement policy, and there are improvements that some Republicans in Congress will try to use coming weeks to make E-Verify mandatory.

E-Verify correctly identified legal workers 93 percent of the time, Westat said. However, previous studies have not gone. What how many immigrants were fooling the E-Verify system. Much of the criticism of E-Verify has focused on whether US citizens and legal immigrants with permission to work were falsely flagged as illegal workers.

Sen. Chuck Schumer of New York, who is working the Democrats' immigration bill and has fought expanding E-Verify because of its flaws, said Wednesday that the fact that E-Verify was inaccurate so often shows that it is not an adequate tool.

"This is a wake-up call to anyone who thinks E-verify is an effective remedy to stop the hiring of illegal immigrants," Schumer said.

A so-called worker verification system that E-Verify is considered essential to any immigration overhaul proposal that has any chance of approval in Congress.

Westat's report, completed in December 2009 using data from the previous year, was quietly posted on Homeland Security's Web site Jan. 28 along with a statement that pointed out E-Verify is accurate "almost half of the time."

"While not perfect, it is important to note that E-Verify is much more effective" than the 54 percent figure given by some employers, the statement said.

Rosenblum said Westat's conclusions show it doesn't make sense to solicit initially expand and invest in E-Verify without fixing the identity theft problem. AP

Tearful Toyota chief says sorry for auto defects

WASHINGTON—A TEARFUL Toyota president Akio Toyoda on Friday apologized for recent auto defects that have driven the world's top carmaker into crisis, and vowed to rebuild shattered global faith in the firm.

"I am deeply sorry," Toyoda on Wednesday carefully told angry US lawmakers in English at the outset of more than three hours of tough questioning seen to shape the fate of the global empire his grandfather founded 70 years ago.

After recently losing the grilling from lawmakers, Toyoda showed the stress of the crisis when addressing a handful of the 170,000 people who the firm says are linked to Toyota and its dealerships across North America.

"At the hearing, I was not given enough time to fully explain myself," Toyoda told them, his voice cracking with emotion. "You and your colleagues across America, around the world, were those still in act.

"Words cannot express my gratitude," he said struggling to keep his composure.

Toyota has said it will now overhaul its quality control measures, forging greater weight on stories of consumers and non-Japanese experts than in the past, creating a new US safety post, and requiring its executives to do test drives, he said.

And it will, before the end of 2010, install a system in all new North American vehicles that allows a brake signal to the engine or override an accelerator signal, said a top Toyoda deputy, Yoshimi Inaba.

Toyoda emphasized his personal connection to overhauling the Japanese giant, while telling the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee: "My name is on every car."

"You have my personal commitment that Toyota will work vigorously and unceasingly to restore the trust of our customers," said the executive, whose voice sometimes trailed off on Japanese television.

Three US congressional panels have launched investigations into incidents of sudden unintended acceleration blamed for nearly 40 US deaths and tied to the recall of more eight million Toyotas vehicles worldwide.

Lawmakers and some drivers who survived Toyota crashes have charged the auto giant with ignoring complaints and incorrectly blaming accidents on floor mats that jam accelerators or on sticky pedals, while ignoring possible electronic problems.

Toyoda said through an interpreter that he was "absolutely confident" electronics were not the cost of the problem. AFP

TOYODA speaks before Toyota dealers in Washington on Feb. 24. AP

German Protestant head quits after drunk driving

BERLIN—THE HEAD OF GERMANY'S 25 million Protestants resigned on Wednesday after police stopped her for driving while under the influence of alcohol just four months after becoming the third woman to head a major Christian church.

Known as the "pope lookey," 52-year-old Margot Kässmann is a regular on television talk shows and had been a controversial choice as head of Germany's EKD, the state association of Protestant churches, because she is a divorced mother of four.

Announcing an emotion, Kässmann told reporters she had made a grave mistake which she deeply regretted.

"But I cannot ignore the fact that my office and my authority ... have been damaged," she said.

"My heart says quite clearly that I cannot remain in office with the authority that is required," Kässmann said.

With immediate effect, the world's group her jobs as leader of the EKD, an umbrella group of 23 Lutherans, Reformed and United Churches, and an Lutheran bishop of Hanover, she said.

State prosecutors in the northern city of Hanover had said on Monday Kässmann was under investigation and could lose her driver's licence for a year after police stopped her for shooting a red light on Saturday night.

She was found to have a blood-alcohol level that was more than three times the legal limit, the prosecutors said.

Widely seen as someone

KÄSSMANN in photo taken in 2005.

whom ordinary people can relate to, Kässmann has worked to restore the church in Germany which has been losing members.

But she drew criticism from many politicians last month for denouncing Germany's military mission in Afghanistan in a new Year's sermon in Berlin.

As one of the few religious leaders in a State country to raise the issue, she said she could not justify the German mission in Afghanistan from a Christian point of view.

Chancellor Angela Merkel, daughter of a Protestant pastor, said she acknowledged Kässmann's resignation with respect and regret.

"I have very much valued the cooperation with Bishop Kässmann," said Merkel in a statement.

Germany has roughly equal numbers of Protestants and Roman Catholics. It has not traditionally close ties would jupiter Kässmann. Reuters

Interval training can sharply cut exercise hours

By Maria Chang

LONDON—DESPITE WHO COSE, plain they have no time to exercise may soon need another excuse.

Some experts say intense exercise workouts could help people squeeze an entire week's workout into less than an hour. Intense exercise regimens, or interval training, was originally developed for Olympic athletes and thought to be too strenuous for normal people.

But in recent years, studies in other populations, including health problems suggest many more people might be able to handle it. If true, that could overturn how officials advise people to exercise....and save millions of people hours in the gym every week. It is also a scenario new to exercise, experts say.

"High-intensity interval training is twice as effective as normal exercise," said Jan Helgerud, an exercise expert at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. "This is like finding a new pill that works better as well ... we should immediately throw out the old story of exercising."

Intense interval training means working very hard for a few minutes, which can provide as between sets. Experts have mostly noted people running or walking, but other activities like rowing or swimming should also work.

Helgerud recommends people try four sessions lasting four minutes each, with three minutes of recovery time in between. Unless you're an elite athlete, it shouldn't be an all-out effort.

"You should be a little out of breath, but you shouldn't have the obvious feeling of exhaustion," Helgerud said.

In Britain and the US, officials recommend that people get 30 minutes and a half hours each week of moderate exercise.

Helgerud says that time could be slashed dramatically if people did interval training instead. He said officials have been too afraid of recommending intense training, fearing it might be too much for most people.

"I'm much more afraid of people not exercising at all," he said. "Inactivity is what's killing us."

When compared to people on a normal exercise routine, like jogging, research has shown those doing interval training can double their endurance, improve their oxygen use and strength by more than 10 percent, and their speed by at least 5 percent. Even studies in the elderly and in heart patients found they had better oxygen use and fitness after doing interval training.

Still, most studies have been done in young, healthy adults, and experts advise people to consult a doctor before starting any fitness program.

Adamson Nicholls, a 56-year-old Londoner and married auto enthusiast, said using interval training, he got into top shape last year in about six weeks, using weekly 45-minute sessions. He estimates the same level would have taken about three months via regular training. AP

Celebrating Freedom from the High Cost of Medicines

GENERICS SAVES

TO THE FILIPINO PEOPLE,

We are happy to inform you that the following medicines have been offered for price reduction under the GOVERNMENT MEDIATED ACCESS PRICE (GMA-P) initiative. No medicine under the GMA price reduction scheme shall be sold at a price exceeding those reflected herein.

GOVERNMENT MEDIATED ACCESS PRICE

GENERIC NAME	DOSAGE STRENGTH AND FORM	COMPANY NAME	BRAND NAME	OLD PRICE	GOVT. MEDIATED ACCESS PRICE	DATE OF EFFECTIVITY
ANTI-HYPERCHOLESTEROLEMIA						
Ezetimibe	10 mg tablet	Merck Sharp & Dohme	Ezetrol	107.50	53.75	31-Mar-10
Ezetimibe + Simvastatin	10 mg + 10 mg tablet	Merck Sharp & Dohme	Vytorin	111.25	55.62	31-Mar-10
	10 mg + 20 mg tablet	Merck Sharp & Dohme	Vytorin	141.00	70.50	31-Mar-10
	10 mg + 40 mg tablet	Merck Sharp & Dohme	Vytorin	202.00	101.00	31-Mar-10
ANTI-HYPERTENSIVE						
Losartan potassium	50 mg tablet	Merck Sharp & Dohme	Cozaar	43.00	21.50	31-Mar-10
	100 mg tablet	Merck Sharp & Dohme	Cozaar	51.00	25.50	31-Mar-10
Losartan potassium + Hydrochlorothiazide	50 mg + 12.5 mg tablet	Merck Sharp & Dohme	Hyzaar	47.50	23.75	31-Mar-10
	100 mg + 12.5 mg tablet	Merck Sharp & Dohme	Hyzaar	63.75	31.88	31-Mar-10
	100 mg + 25 mg tablet	Merck Sharp & Dohme	Hyzaar DS	63.75	31.88	31-Mar-10
Felodipine + Metoprolol	5 mg + 50 mg tablet	AstraZeneca Phils	Logimax	57.00	31.00	31-Mar-10
MEDICINE FOR BLADDER AND PROSTATE DISORDERS						
Dutasteride	500 mcg capsule	GlaxoSmithKline	Avodart	93.00	50.00	1-Mar-10
ANTI-DEPRESSANT						
Paroxetine HCl	20 mg tablet	GlaxoSmithKline	Seroxat	108.50	65.74	31-Mar-10
ANTI-PSYCHOTIC						
Clozapine	25 mg tablet	Novartis	Leponex	36.75	23.75	31-Mar-10
	100 mg tablet	Novartis	Leponex	119.75	77.75	31-Mar-10
ANTI- CANCER						
Lapatinib ditosylate	250 mg tablet	GlaxoSmithKline	Tykerb	940.00	564.00	31-Mar-10
Goserelin acetate	3.6 mg Inj	AstraZeneca Phils	Zoladex	10,460.00	6,799.00	31-Mar-10
	10.8 mg Inj	AstraZeneca Phils	Zoladex LA	30,758.00	19,993.00	31-Mar-10
L- Asparaginase	10,000 I.U. Inj	Hi-Eisai	Leunase	3,624.00	2,670.00	31-Mar-10
ANTI-ASTHMA						
Salbutamol	200 mcg rotacap + rotahaler device	GlaxoSmithKline	Ventolin Rotapack	145.00	100.00	1-Mar-10
ANTI-COAGULANT						
Warfarin sodium	1 mg tablet	PL Asia Pacific (Phils.) Inc.	Coumadin	34.25	27.40	31-Mar-10
	2.5 mg tablet	PL Asia Pacific (Phils.) Inc.	Coumadin	43.50	34.80	31-Mar-10
	5 mg tablet	PL Asia Pacific (Phils.) Inc.	Coumadin	59.25	47.40	31-Mar-10
Nadroparin calcium	3,800 I.U. / 0.4 mL Inj.	GlaxoSmithKline	Fraxiparine	6,073.00	5,410.00	31-Mar-10
EYE PREPARATIONS						
Betaxolol HCl	0.5% x 5 mL eye drops	Alcon	Betoptic	672.25	470.60	1-Mar-10
Ciprofloxacin HCl	0.3% x 5 mL eye drops	Alcon	Ciloxan	361.75	296.64	1-Apr-10
Pilocarpine HCl	2% x 15 mL eye drops	Alcon	Isopto Carpine	348.25	299.50	1-Jun-10
Sodium dihydroazapentacene polysulfonate	150 mcg/mL x 15 mL eye solution	Alcon	Quinax	369.75	314.30	1-Aug-10
		NEW INTRODUCTION		**INNOVATOR PRICE**		
ANTI-HEPATITIS B/ ANTI-VIRAL						
Clevudine	30 mg tablet	Hi-Eisai	Revovir	332.35	90.00	31-Mar-10
ANTIBIOTIC/ ANTIBACTERIAL						
Levofloxacin	500 mg tablet	Winthrop		108.00	63.00	31-Mar-10
ANTI-INFLAMMATORY (NSAIDS)/PAIN RELIEVER						
Meloxicam	7.5 mg tablet	Winthrop		34.17	13.50	31-Mar-10
	15 mg tablet	Winthrop		51.07	22.50	31-Mar-10
ANTI-ASTHMA						
Salmeterol xinafoate + Fluticasone propionate	25 mcg + 50 mcg metered dose inhaler + dose counter	GlaxoSmithKline	Seretide (new device)	613.25 without dose counter	429.28	1-Aug-10
	25 mcg + 125 mcg metered dose inhaler + dose counter	GlaxoSmithKline	Seretide (new device)	933.00 without dose counter	653.10	1-Aug-10
	25 mcg + 250 mcg metered dose inhaler + dose counter	GlaxoSmithKline	Seretide (new device)	1,310.00 without dose counter	917.00	1-Aug-10

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ALL MEDICINES ABOVE REQUIRE A DOCTOR'S PRESCRIPTION.

Celebrating Freedom from the High Cost of Medicines

GENERICS SAVES

GOVERNMENT MEDIATED ACCESS PRICE

GENERIC NAME	DOSAGE STRENGTH AND FORM	COMPANY NAME	BRAND NAME	OLD RETAIL PRICE	GOVERNMENT MEDIATED ACCESS PRICE	DATE OF EFFECTIVITY
DIALYSATES/ DIALYSIS SOLUTIONS AND MEDICAL DEVICES						
Hemodialysis Acid Concentrate	Acid Concentrate 01 - 11 (5 L)	Euro-Med	Solacid AC	880.00	484.00	31-Mar-10
	Acid Concentrate 01 - 11 (10 L)	Euro-Med	Solacid AC	1680.00	924.00	31-Mar-10
	Acid Concentrate 01, 02, 05, 10, 11 (5 L)	B. Braun Avitam	AC	440.00	308.00	31-Mar-10
	Acid Concentrate (5 L)	B. Braun Avitam	3810648	630.00	448.00	31-Mar-10
	Acid Concentrate (5 L)	B. Braun Avitam	3810652	630.00	448.00	31-Mar-10
	Acid Concentrate (5 L)	B. Braun Avitam	3810653	630.00	448.00	31-Mar-10
	Acid Concentrate (5 L)	B. Braun Avitam	3810645	630.00	448.00	31-Mar-10
	Acid Concentrate (5 L)	B. Braun Avitam	3810654	630.00	448.00	31-Mar-10
	Acid Concentrate (5 L)	B. Braun Avitam	3810655	630.00	448.00	31-Mar-10
	Acid Concentrate (5 L)	B. Braun Avitam	3810658	630.00	448.00	31-Mar-10
	Acid Concentrate (5 L)	B. Braun Avitam	3810646	630.00	448.00	31-Mar-10
	Acid Concentrate (10 L)	B. Braun Avitam	3810638	1200.00	840.00	31-Mar-10
Hemodialysis Acid Concentrate with Potassium	Acid Concentrate 22 (5 L)	Baxter Healthcare Phils.	Biasol AC - 22	395.00	276.00	31-Mar-10
Hemodialysis Acid Concentrate without Potassium	Acid Concentrate 29 (5 L)	Baxter Healthcare Phils.	Biasol AC - 29	395.00	276.00	31-Mar-10
Hemodialysis Bicarbonate Concentrate	10 Liters	B. Braun Avitam	3810952	1200.00	600.00	31-Mar-10
	Bicarbonate Conc. 01 - 02 (5 L)	Euro-Med	Solucarb BC	880.00	484.00	31-Mar-10
	Bicarbonate Conc. 01 - 02 (10 L)	Euro-Med	Solucarb BC	1680.00	924.00	31-Mar-10
	Bicarbonate Conc. 01 (10 L)	B. Braun Avitam	BC 01	840.00	588.00	31-Mar-10
Liquid Bicarbonate Concentrate		Baxter	Biasol BC - 01	395.00	276.00	31-Mar-10
	8% Concentrate (5 L)	Euro-Med	Solucarb BC 03-8%	880.00	484.00	31-Mar-10
	8% Concentrate (10 L)	Euro-Med	Solucarb BC 03-8%	1680.00	924.00	31-Mar-10
	8% Concentrate (10 L)	B. Braun Avitam	3810937	1200.00	840.00	31-Mar-10
	8.4% Concentrate (5 L)	Euro-Med	Solucarb BC 03-8.4%	880.00	484.00	31-Mar-10
	8.4% Concentrate (5 L)	B. Braun Avitam	BC 03 -8.4%	440.00	308.00	31-Mar-10
	8.4% Concentrate (10 L)	Euro-Med	Solucarb BC 03-8.4%	1680.00	924.00	31-Mar-10
Peritoneal Dialysis Solution with 1.5% Dextrose	1 Liter	B. Braun Avitam	EMED021	120.00	90.00	31-Mar-10
Peritoneal Dialysis solution with 4.25% Dextrose	1 Liter	B. Braun Avitam	EMED022	130.00	98.00	31-Mar-10
Sodium Bicarbonate	840 g (pouch)	Euro-Med		520.00	286.00	31-Mar-10
	840 g (pouch)	B. Braun Avitam	EMED027	260.00	182.00	31-Mar-10
Sodium Bicarbonate with Sodium Chloride	845 g (pouch)	Euro-Med		520.00	286.00	31-Mar-10
	845 g (pouch)	B. Braun Avitam	EMED028	260.00	182.00	31-Mar-10
Sodium Bicarbonate	440 g powder (cartridge)	B. Braun Avitam	496	700.00	458.00	31-Mar-10
Duosol without Potassium	CRRT solution (5 L)	B. Braun Avitam	B911	4000.00	2800.00	31-Mar-10
CA-HP Dialyzer Model 110		Baxter Phils.		995.00	845.75	1-Mar-10
CA-HP Dialyzer Model 130		Baxter Phils.		1105.00	939.25	1-Mar-10
CA-HP Dialyzer Model 150		Baxter Phils.		1205.00	1024.25	1-Mar-10
CA-HP Dialyzer Model 170		Baxter Phils.		1315.00	1117.75	1-Mar-10
CA-HP Dialyzer Model 210		Baxter Phils.		1420.00	1207.00	1-Mar-10

ALL MEDICINES ABOVE REQUIRE A DOCTOR'S PRESCRIPTION

Celebrating Freedom from the High Cost of Medicines

GENERICS SAVES

TO THE FILIPINO PEOPLE,

Please be reminded that the following prices of medicines under the Government Mediated Access Price initiative remain effective. No medicine price under this price reduction scheme should exceed the GMA-Price reflected herein.

All drugstore outlets, hospital pharmacies and other retail outlets found selling medicines above the GMA prices shown here will be penalized as appropriate in accordance with existing policies and laws.

For complaints or reports of violation, please call: Food and Drug Administration: (02) 809-4390

GOVERNMENT MEDIATED ACCESS PRICE

GENERIC NAME	DOSAGE STRENGTH AND FORM	COMPANY NAME	BRAND NAME	OLD RETAIL PRICE	GMA GOVERNMENT MEDIATED ACCESS PRICE
ANTIHYPERTENSIVE					
Telmisartan	40 mg tablet	Boehringer	Micardis	51.60	35.76
	80 mg tablet	Boehringer	Micardis plus	66.00	45.60
Telmisartan + Hydrochlorothiazide	40 mg + 12.5 mg tablet	Boehringer	Micardis	66.00	44.50
	80 mg + 12.5 mg tablet	Boehringer	Micardis plus	66.00	44.50
Irbesartan	150 mg tablet	Sanofi-Aventis	Aprovel	48.76	34.38
	300 mg tablet	Sanofi-Aventis	Aprovel	56.26	39.13
Irbesartan + Hydrochlorothiazide	150 mg + 12.5 mg tablet	Sanofi-Aventis	CoAprovel	60.00	40.00
	300 mg + 12.5 mg tablet	Sanofi-Aventis	CoAprovel	63.00	41.50
ANTITHROMBOTICS					
Clopidogrel	75 mg tablet	Sanofi-Aventis	Plavix	122.50	81.76
ANTI-DIABETES					
Gliclazide	30 mg Modified Release tablet	Servier	Diamicron MR	15.00	9.75
	80 mg tablet	Servier	Diamicron	15.00	9.75
ANTIBACTERIAL					
Piperacillin + Tazobactam	2 g + 250 mg vial Inj	Wyeth	Tazocin	2175.46	736.20
	4 g + 500 mg vial Inj	Wyeth	Tazocin	4014.00	1276.00
Ciprofloxacin	500 mg tablet	Bayer	Ciprobay	63.83	41.91
	500 mg tablet (Modified Release)	Bayer	Ciprobay XR	99.23	48.62
	1 g tablet	Bayer	Ciprobay	142.10	72.00
	250 mg tablet	Bayer	Ciprobay	65.13	33.57
	2 mg/mL IV infusion (100 mL)	Bayer	Ciprobay	1884.17	943.00
	100 mg IV infusion (50 mL)	Bayer	Ciprobay	1440.87	720.43
	400 mg IV infusion (200 mL)	Bayer	Ciprobay	3207.17	1603.59
Metronidazole	125 mg/5mL suspension (60 mL)	Sanofi-Aventis	Flagyl	131.00	66.00
	500 mg tablet	Sanofi-Aventis via Winthrop	Sanofi-Aventis via Winthrop	23.50	11.75
	500 mg IV infusion (100mL)	Sanofi-Aventis	Flagyl	370.00	189.76
Co-Amoxiclav (Amoxicillin + Clavulanic acid)	625 mg tablet	GlaxoSmithKline	Augmentin	97.75	48.88
	375 mg tablet	GlaxoSmithKline	Augmentin	79.50	39.75
	1 g tablet	GlaxoSmithKline	Augmentin	142.20	71.10
	600 mg vial Inj	GlaxoSmithKline	Augmentin	687.50	343.76
	1.2 g vial Inj	GlaxoSmithKline	Augmentin	1156.75	578.40
	200 mg + 28.5 mg/5mL suspension (70mL)	GlaxoSmithKline	Augmentin	555.00	277.76
	125 mg + 31.25 mg/5 mL suspension (60mL)	GlaxoSmithKline	Augmentin	378.00	189.00
	250 mg + 62.5 mg/ 5 mL suspension (60mL)	GlaxoSmithKline	Augmentin	648.00	324.25
	400 mg + 57 mg/5 mL suspension (70 mL)	GlaxoSmithKline	Augmentin	940.00	470.20
	400 mg + 57 mg/5 mL suspension (28 mL)	GlaxoSmithKline	Augmentin	623.75	391.90
ANTINEOPLASTIC					
Bleomycin	15 mg Inj	Bristol-Meyer Squibb via Zuellig	Blenoxane	9,750.00	3920.00
Carboplatin	10 mg/mL (15 mL) or 150 mg Inj	Bristol-Meyer Squibb via Zuellig	Paraplatin	3,915.00	1959.00
Cisplatin	50 mg vial Inj	Bristol-Meyer Squibb via Zuellig	Platinol	2894.00	1126.00
Cyclophosphamide	50 mg tablet	Bristol-Meyer Squibb via Zuellig	Cytoxan	33.50	17.50
	200 mg vial Inj	Baxter	Endoxan	686.00	176.00
	500 mg vial Inj	Bristol-Meyer Squibb via Zuellig	Platinol	640.00	334.00
	1 g or 1000 mg vial Inj	Qualimed	Qualimed	1,155.00	577.50
Etoposide	100 mg tablet	Qualimed	Qualimed	1130.00	565.00
Mercaptopurine	50 mg tablet	GlaxoSmithKline	Puri-nethol	79.00	39.50
Methotrexate sodium	2.5 mg tablet	Qualimed	Qualimed	23.00	11.50
	50 mg/ 2mL Inj	Qualimed	Qualimed	612.00	306.00
Mesna (adjunct to therapy)	400 mg Inj	Baxter	Uromitexan	365.00	166.67

ALL MEDICINES ABOVE REQUIRE A DOCTOR'S PRESCRIPTION

Celebrating Freedom from the High Cost of Medicines

GENERICS SAVES

GENERIC NAME	DOSAGE STRENGTH AND FORM	MAXIMUM DRUG RETAIL PRICE
ANTI-HYPERTENSIVE		
Amlodipine (including its S-isomer and all salt form)	2.5 mg tablet	8.60
	5 mg tablet	22.85
	10 mg tablet	38.50
ANTI-CHOLESTEROL		
Atorvastatin	10 mg tablet	34.48
	20 mg tablet	59.13
	40 mg tablet	93.50
	80 mg tablet	93.63
Amlodipine besilate + Atorvastatin calcium	5 mg + 10 mg tablet	43.75
	5 mg + 20 mg tablet	68.75
	5 mg + 40 mg tablet	84.43
	5 mg + 80 mg tablet	89.06
	10 mg + 10 mg tablet	51.13
	10 mg + 20 mg tablet	73.25
	10 mg + 40 mg tablet	91.79
	10 mg + 80 mg tablet	91.79
ANTIBIOTIC		
Azithromycin and all its Salt form	250 mg tablet	108.50
	200 mg/5 mL powder for suspension (15 mL)	427.50
	200 mg/5 mL powder for suspension (22.50 mL)	638.00
	500 mg tablet	101.43
	500 mg vial for inj	892.50
	2 g granules	468.00
ANTI-CANCER		
Cytarabine	100 mg/ mL inj	340.00
	100 mg/ mL (5mL) or 500 mg vial inj	900.00
	100 mg/ mL (10mL) or 1g vial inj	1800.00
	20 mg/mL (5mL) inj	1980.00
Doxorubicin and all its Salt form	10 mg vial for inj	1445.75
	50 mg vial for inj	2365.74

GOVERNMENT MEDIATED ACCESS PRICE

GENERIC NAME	DOSAGE STRENGTH AND FORM	COMPANY NAME	OLD PRICE	GOVERNMENT MEDIATED ACCESS PRICE
OPIOID ANALGESIC				
1. Fentanyl (as citrate)	50 mcg/ mL, (10 mL) inj	Janssen	1155.00	577.50
	50 mcg/ mL, (2 mL) inj	Janssen	304.00	152.00
ANTI-DIABETIC BIGUANIDE				
2. Glibenclamide	5 mg tablet	Sanofi-Aventis	15.00	8.00
NEUROPROTECTIVE				
3. Citicoline	500 mg inj	Takeda Pharmaceuticals	498.25	249.00
	1000 mg inj	Takeda Pharmaceuticals	668.50	482.00
ANTI-THYROID				
4. Thiamazole (Methimazole)	5 mg tablet	Pharma Link Asia Pacific	10.50	8.00
LIPATIC PROTECTOR				
5. Glucosmetamine + Glucodiamine + Nicotinamide Ascorbate	750 mg + 30 mg + 20 mg capsule	Pharma Link Asia Pacific	18.00	12.00
	187.5 mg + 50 mg + 25 mg/5mL syrup (60mL)	Pharma Link Asia Pacific	264.75	211.80
	187.5 mg + 50 mg + 25 mg/5mL syrup (120mL)	Pharma Link Asia Pacific	481.75	385.40
ANTI-HYPERTENSIVE				
6. Betalol	100 mg tablet	Bristol Wyers Squibb	91.75	78.14
7. Losartan (as potassium)	50 mg tablet	Chiral	23.80	12.68
ANTI-ALLERGIES				
8. Cetirizine (as dihydrochloride)	10 mg tablet	Chiral	23.02	16.11
NON-STEROIDRUGS (NSAIDS)				
9. Diclofenac (as sodium)	50 mg tablet	Chiral	7.28	5.15
ANTIBIOTIC ANTI-INFECTIVE				
10. Cefalexin (as monohydrate)	500 mg capsule	Chiral	27.72	23.15
11. Clarithromycin	250 mg tablet	Chiral	73.00	36.00
	500 mg tablet	Chiral	117.60	84.00
ANTIFUNGAL				
12. Miconazole	2%, 15 g tube cream	Chiral	294.80	165.11
13. Terinafine	1%, 15 g tube cream	Chiral	151.80	129.03
VITAMINS AND MINERAL				
14. Multivitamins		Chiral	13.80	12.42
ANTI-INFLAMMATORY/ANTIPYRETICS				
15. Betamethasone	15 g tube ointment	Chiral	420.00	357.00
ANTI-CHOLESTEROL				
16. Simvastatin	10 mg tablet	Chiral	18.00	12.60
	20 mg tablet	Chiral	21.60	15.12
	40 mg tablet	Chiral	26.40	18.84
ANTI-ANGINAL				
17. Trimetazidine HCl	20 mg tablet	Chiral	18.80	13.02
ANTI-HISTAMETIC/ANTICANCER				
18. Megesterol Acetate	160 mg tablet	Bristol Wyers Squibb	436.75	341.31
19. Rocefamide	1 g vial for inj	Qualimed	2650.00	2340.00
	2 g vial for inj	Qualimed	3280.00	3010.00
20. Mitomycin	10 mg vial for inj	Qualimed	1430.00	1176.00
21. Erlotinib	150 mg tablet	Roche	5229.00	4180.00
22. Tamoxifen	20 mg tablet	AstraZeneca	64.00	32.00
ANTIVIRALS				
23. Oseltamivir	75 mg capsule	Roche	150.50	107.00

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ALL MEDICINES ABOVE REQUIRE A DOCTOR'S PRESCRIPTION.

THE PUBLIC DESERVES TO KNOW

Business Community expresses serious concern about the Shell Tax Issue

In various public statements in recent weeks, Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corporation (Shell) clarified its position on the key issues regarding the alleged non-payment of excise taxes for its imports of Catalytic Cracked Gasoline (CCG) and Light Catalytic Cracked Gasoline (LCCG). Shell maintains that it has paid all applicable taxes on these raw materials, and that there are no factual or legal bases for saying otherwise.

Various business organisations, including the **Joint Foreign Chambers (JFC)**, as well as the local federations **Employers Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP)**, **Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI)** and **Philippine Exporters Confederation Inc. (PHILEXPORT)** have earlier spoken on this issue, due to its serious political, economic and social implications for the country:

1. This issue results in double taxation (the imposition of excise tax on the both the imported raw materials used and in the finished products), which not only puts Shell in an uneven playing field compared to other oil players, but more importantly:

- Reflects instability in government policies (with dangerous precedent set due to retroactive application); and
- Results in a policy implication of discouraging manufacturing investments in the country, thus, destroying the higher value added the industry contributes.

2. The issue similarly reflects abuse of seizure power by the Bureau of Customs, against importers with contested tax assessments.

In their February 15 public statement, the **Joint Foreign Chambers**, representing seven Chambers of Commerce and Industry, numbering around 1,700 multinational companies with substantial investment in the Philippines, echoed the above concerns as its members watch the tax dispute closely:

"Double taxation, taxing both intermediates and final product, undermines the JFC's efforts to encourage manufacturing investments in the Philippines. Double taxation favors trading over manufacturing, which cannot be in the interest of Philippine economic policy makers. We suggest that this policy be urgently addressed as it is detrimental to the vision of growth in manufacturing."

On February 24, the **Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines (FINEX)** and the **Management Association of the Philippines (MAP)**, similarly issued a joint statement which expressed grave concern over the decision of the Bureau of Internal Revenue with regard to taxes applied to Shell:

"Consistency, predictability, and fairness of government policies, rules and regulations are essential to business. If investments are to be attracted, businessmen should be confident that their investments would not be subject to arbitrary and unreasonable regulatory and policy changes.

There's no way an investor can calculate risks associated with abrupt changes in government policies. He is not going to invest in a country with an inconsistent and uncertain regulatory climate. He will just go elsewhere."

Shell, together with the business community, remains vigilant and hopeful for the immediate resolution of this important issue. This issue is important and as part of Shell's business principles, it is Shell's duty to provide the public with accurate and truthful information, in the spirit of fairness and transparency.

The public deserves to know.

WHAT'S INSIDE
■ TCC aces sweep past Canlubang at Binitin /A35

SPORTS
Editor Teddyboy S. Molavedra
Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Ochoa

■ Mavs subdue Kobe, Lakers /A36

Tired but inspired Giants gun for 2-0 vs Aces today

by Cedrill P. Tajon

PUREFOODS COACH RYAN GREGORIO has stopped asking his players how they feel about the grueling schedule the Giants have gone through over the past month.

"There is no time to get tired, no time to rest," said Gregorio. "It's the Finals and we all wanted to be here."

Purefoods will be playing its 13th game in 28 days tonight when the Giants shoot for a 2-0 lead against the Alaska Aces in their BPC-PBA Philippine Cup best-of-seven series at the Araneta Coliseum.

"I have stopped asking them if they are tired or not," said Gregorio. "We just 'assess the [situation] now."

Behind the clutch shooting of Jonas Sip and Kelly Raymundo and stern resolve defense, the Giants marshaled their way to a gut-wrenching 88-77 victory in Game 1 Wednesday.

The victory silenced the perception that the Aces are the favorites in the series after getting the luxury of a weeklong rest following their semifinal sweep of Barangay Ginebra.

But Giants took the Aces out of their doldrums, shredded their defense and put the league's top-seeded team in an unfamiliar position—behind in order to the tournament.

"It's really good momentum now for us but the battle is not over," said Gregorio. "We've only won Game 1. That's not only advantage."

Alaska coach Tim Cone expects the Ace to come out strong in Game 2.

"I think we can play a whole lot better," said Cone, whose team was held to just 36 percent shooting in Game 1.

"We didn't play well in Game 1 and some of the credit goes to them. We are far better in terms of rebounding than. We don't have time to feel bad about this. It's a seven-game series."

With Regie Sip and Marc Pingris taking turns in defending him, Alaska starts ace Willie Miller stands only nine of his 27 shots to finish with 24 points.

"For as long as the others are contained, maybe it's a good play for us," Gregorio said.

Acknowledging Coan's ability to make the adjustments, Gregorio believes that finding a "fundamentally sound" team like Alaska twice in three days is easier said than done.

"We just can't go out of control on Alaska," he said. "If you take flustered shots, they will pounce on it."

Tiny, despite the pesky defense of LA Tenorio and Brandon Cobbs, still wound up with 24 points in Game 1 to offset Roger Yap's five-point effort.

SIZING? Tiues (front) has been a source of power for Alaska in the title series. AUGUSTO SALINO

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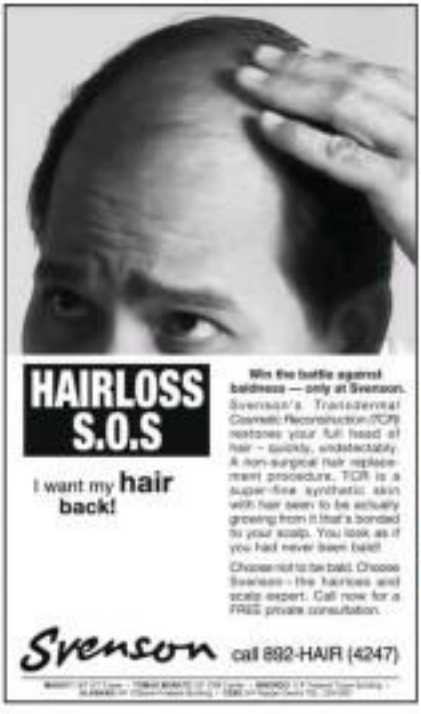


Ace swimmer Adorna perfect 7-of-7 for NCR

By Marc Anthony Reyes

SWIMMER CLAIRE ADORNA OF THE National Capital Region showed herself with a seventh gold medal in as many event yesterday to emerge as the winningest athlete in the Commission on Higher Education National Games at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

The 20-year-old Adorna grabbed her last gold by anchoring the women's 4x100 meter medley relay team of Jaclyn Justo, Quennie Lao and Jacqueline Garcia to victory with a time of 5:07.38 minutes and 1.29 seconds.

Adorna, a freshman sports science student at the University of the Philippines, earlier struck in the women's 100-meter butterfly, 200m freestyle, 50m backstroke, 400m individual medley, 50m free and in the 4x100m free relay.

Day 1 booster Carla Grobacka, also of UE also had a chance for a seven-gold romp but her partnership with Claudine Gagapa, Elleen Llanada and Kate Asuncion in the 4x200 meter freestyle relay could do no better than a bronze.

The youngest sister of 80th national senior point player Ivan Gonzalez prevailed earlier in the 400m free and 50m fly to raise her golden collection to six.

Phoenix Vinayat Jocelyn Federan, Alexandra Carolino, Mengle Mabilat and Yvonne Rosales copped the gold in the 4x200 free relay with Region 4A (Calabarzon) taking second place.

At the Rizal Memorial oval, University of Santo Tomas' Sevenets Salvat bagged her second gold for the day by ruling the women's 400 meter with a time of two minutes and 9.9 seconds.

The winning time surpassed her clocking of 2:16.88 in the UAAP athletics competition 20 days ago.

She earlier won the women's 1,500-meter run in 10:28.9 to become the most bemedalled athlete in track and field.

The 5-foot-8 marksey who bagged seven golds in the meet's 10ME will go for a perfect meet today in the 4x400m relay her last event.

Because this is the first time the CHEd is holding integrated national games, the winning performances are compared against existing collegiate records.

Last Tuesday Salvat also surpassed the UAAP mark of 4:39.0 set by Bernadita Maggay in winning the women's 1,500m in 4:37.6.

For her twin feats, Salvat will receive P40,000 from the Philippine Sports Commission which pledged P20,000 for each collegiate record surpassed.

In boxing, Cordillera Administrative Region sent three boxers to the finals, while Region III (Mimaropa) and Region 12 had two each.

Gramco Godawe of UAE outpointed Bataan's Bernabe Gonzaga of Region III (27-19) in the 52kg division, teammate Dante Durray earned a referee-stopped-contest win over Palawan Angela of Region 4B in the 56kg category while Glenvic Catoli scored Quirino Mellejor Jr. of Region 11 (Southern Mindanao), 41-7, in the 57kg-finals.

Mimaropa's Lorry Castro and Sudirman Mahim also advanced in the gold medal matches, beating Kennedy Zamudio of Region 1 (Ilocos Region), 32-9, in 60kg and Nilo Galinato of NCR, 41-32, in 67kg, respectively.

Mark Anthony Bandoja defeated Allan Belleza of Region 7 (26-7) in 48kg while Alfredo Demecal Jr. overwhelmed UAE's Victor Bitong, 25-17, in the 60kg duel to boost Southern Mindanao's stock.

NCR's Jose Annie Ragos relaxes his arms up before eventually winning the pole vault gold during the CHEd National Games yesterday. MIKE ALCOY

Pharex bucks Wilson's 32

Ascof dribblers down AddMix

By Cedrif P. Topia

NOT EVEN ANOTHER SENSATIONAL individual effort from 2009 NCAA MVP John Wilson could get Pharex one of its early-season foals.

The Pharex B Complex fighting Maroons, tougher when it mattered, overthrew the freemasters' late surge for an 80-77 decision yesterday to clip Jerick Ilot, Wilson Evan Pacheco Dayao and the NKOR Flying E Arenas in San Juan.

The victory was the second in three games for the Fighting Maroons, who sent Wilson's 22-point effort down the drain.

Aaron Lagundi completed a sweep for National Administrative tennis as the National Cough Busters dumped the AddMix Transformers, 68-50, in the second game.

Evan Gyaban ran all of Bend's last seven points to help the Natural Cough Busters claim their first win in three starts.

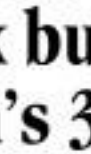
Ilot followed up his triple-dot broke a 73-all deadlock with a three-point play with 37.2 seconds left to give Ascof a 79-76 advantage.

Bob Labagala stole AddMix's inbound pass on the next play to seal the victory.

"We showed our character and showed some resiliency after losing our first two games," Ascof coach Carlo Tito said.

Pharex B squandered a 10-point lead in the fourth quarter in the 77-78 loss to Cebu Energy Drink last Saturday. There was no collapse this time as Ric Manuel and Wendy Co made clutch shots to quell the Pretenders' rally.

"At least we learned from our mistake from last time," said Pharex B coach Alvin Castro. "Without exactly four or single-handedly. He's like a third [one who can score anything he wants to."



LEWIN Ascof Aaron Lagundi and Ric Cris Cruz and Jake Cuba of AddMix prepare to grab the rebound in their PBL match yesterday.

First Manila 5K race hits road March 14

THE FIRST MANILA 5000 RUN, COVERING a distance of 5,000 meters or 5 kilometers, fires off at the Colorado Centre of the Philippines grounds on March 14.

The initial project of Rondezvingpreneur (RRC), a race management and equipment rental company, will feature an Elite division for runners with personal best of sub-20 minutes and the Open category for runners of various fitness levels.

The age categories for male and female are 19 years old and below, 20-29's, 30-39, 40-49, and 50-58. There will also be a 58-and-over category for women and 60-69, and 70-and-over for men.

RRC managing director and race organizer Dino Jose said the event will start with the 5,000 meter run, the shortest road race but with an equivalent Olympic event, albeit in the oval.

"RRC is committed to contributing in elevating the standard of road races and in proving the level of performance of the Filipino runners," said Jose, also a reserve marathon runner.

Jose added that Bel Deutsch, former president of the Association of Road Race Organizers which presided over the 1990s running boom, is an RRC consultant.

Entry fee is P350, which will include a singlet and certificate of achievement. Registration is ongoing at the second floor of the SSC tabulation building at the Philsports Sports Complex in Mandy, Clark Epsom centers and B.G.C. at the Bonifacio High Street in Taguig.

SPORTSWATCH

Rowing, dragon boat execs discuss Asiad preparations

PREPARATIONS BEING MADE BY BOARDS OF the rowing federation and the dragon boat federation for November's Asian Games in Guangzhou and the venue of the University of Iloilo-Tomas Hall of Fame project are the major topics of discussion in today's Sportswatch newspaper weekly session starting at 11 a.m. at the Ramayan Restaurant-Pasay Road.

UST varsity alumni shindig

THE UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS IS inviting former varsity athletes in the UST Varsity Alumni Homecoming on Sat. 25. It is set at the UST gym. Tickets are P500 each to serve as fund-raising for the varsity alumni. For inquiries, call Mercy Ravena, varsity alumni president at 09158-8000347.

Pasay 4-cock derby today

A FORTY-COMBINED DOWNTOWN AREING top cockers from Batangas, Laguna, Cavite and Metro Manila will highlight the PETA 4-Cock Derby today at the Pasay City Coliseum.

The PETA group of barangays is hosting the event featuring some 72 fights.

PCC of managers Eric dela Rosa and Rolando Ojano said as much as P500,000 will be won by the champion today.

Meanwhile, fastlight enthusiasts gear up for the Smartbro Taguaise One-Cock Derby on Wednesday.

By Top Choice
As San Lazaro GP

Graduating athletes at a crossroads

THE COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC SEASON is ending simultaneously with the seniors' rush to submit final papers and sound sensible for real course. Parents are filled with the expectation of seeing their children graduate for the final academic work and graduation day. Raising thousands of names that will be read, only one will really matter to them.

A recent news report on "TV Patrol" said that batch 2011 would have many job opportunities waiting for them. That's a ray of good news until everything else on read on are. The call centers are there of course but so are hospitals and medical centers in need of nurses. Budding entrepreneurs will also have room for young talent. There is also interest in service, with some young people considering government or NGO work even if the jobs pay much closer to the minimum and with no room for frills.

The graduating athletes are now at the crossroads of their lives. The talented basketball players will have no problem as the PBL and other leagues offer the opportunity to hone skills and a shot at the big paychecks of a professional sports career. Those who are to sports with business persons may have a chance at staying in their discipline and finding out how far they can go in international competitions.

What about those talented students athletes who have nowhere to go after college? If they were disciplined enough to hit the books and graduate for options or have their jobs big days ended, then they can glide into the task of building employment careers. However, if they were lazy and indifferent, then it becomes doubly hard because their lax years in dummies classmates have the edge over them in the hunt for jobs.

Some college athletes will dabble in regional meets or join the military where they can extend their playing years. Others will segue into coaching, serving as assistants to the coaches or that mentored them or trying their luck as their former high schools.

Perhaps this is one of the gaps in our sports development, that transition period when athletes finish their school careers and their hope that a noble sports patron or program will take them in. Individual sport athletes may have fewer problems than those who play in team sports. Only a few people and programs can fund whole teams on a sustained basis.

I can state that the PBL and PCC have elite athlete programs that are saved pushing forward to gain popular and corporate support. Maybe all they need are a good name that is easy to recall.

In the early part of my career, I was production manager of the advertising agency of the fund campaign of Gilmong Ablay in the 1980s. As we toured the country with an audio-visual show, I noticed a generation interest in Philippine sports and a desire to pitch in. "In this day, I think Michael Jacon's concept and name for that training program for elite athletes into the earliest and most appropriate. And it delivered too, with the program retooling more than a dozen of medals during the week.

Maybe another pioneering sports leader can whip up a name and program that is just as exciting. The name shouldn't be laboratorie or a tongue twister like the title of a research paper. It should be simple and catchy with a theme. Except so that the talented athletes who finish school might have a place to go to before joining the race to make a living.

HIGH FIVE CHAMPS Chiang Kai Shek College rapers and officials celebrate their championship victory over St. Stephen's High Schoolin the recent 7th Barlan Pound Cup Basketball Tournament. Breaking their 9th straight crown since 2006, the Blazing Dragons took Game 1 and 2, 62-56 and 56-45, of the best-of-three finals while extending their unbeaten streak to 16 games. CKSC president Dr. Alex Chang Ong Kee flanked by other officials.

Jubilo Tagumpaid the trophy from Rotary Club of Bagumbayan Manila president Henry Ong Chan and PA Chinese Tsoue Club vice president Dr. Miguel Yu and Dr. John de Guzman.

PCU, San Beda tossers stun tough Petron foes

SAN MARTIN, CAVITE—PHILippine Christian University Dasmariñas and Perlas-Manila surprised their heavily favored rivals yesterday at the start of the 2012 Petron Ladies' Beach Volleyball tournament's first leg here.

Alexa Alicia Adolfo and Alyssa-za Marie Gonzaga downed University of the Enrich Francesca Pennetta and Almeyda de Belia, 21-9, at the De La Salle Health and Sciences institute sand court.

Adolfo and Gonzaga then struck again, this time against PMFA's Sarmene Navarro and Lorelie Paul, 21-6, to the event supported by Milaan and Speedo.

Perlas de La Cruz and Anna Carissa Villablanca of San Beda-Alabang upset the experienced Arenas pair of Aira Evgenio and Jessica Miranda, 27-25.

The UE duo of Mary Ann Balmaceda and Jessica Perez routed PMMS Dyanne Rose Bonoan and Jean Moraza, 21-7. The PMMA tandem also bested ex-PUP's Joy de Jesus Rivas and Melanie Lamoiales.

Aurora's Shanah Ira and Glory-cute Gracia bested SBC's Jaymee Yap and Jean Castillo, 21-19.

PAL INTERCLUB

TCC aces sweep past Canlubang at Binitin

By Manong R. Castillo

BACOLOD—RISING TONLITS AGUSTIN'S sizzling final eight holes, The Country Club yesterday entered a two-point lead after defeating ex-captain Canlubang at the half-way mark of the 62nd Philippine Airlines Interclub golf championship.

The pro-bound Gusty picked up the draw in the third stretch and beat Jamil Alinlao by three points to be clinched it with a two-under-par 68 for 38 points at the tight Binitin course in Bacolod town.

PAL Amateurs rookie Carl Crampis dominated Jessie Balandan with a 71 for 35 points, leaving Hong Kong domestic champion Dante Bautista contributed 31 and ex-Negros Baron Zanorie Guy Gidon had 30 as TCC accumulated a second straight 134-for-108 overall.

Canlubang settled for a 32 after hitting the wrong ball on his final hole and Art Adolfo managed just a 31.

Bautista penalized himself the mandatory two strokes after realizing his mistake and that proved the cushion TCC needed to avert the upset.

"I was so confident going to that hole that I didn't bother checking if it was mine or not," said Bautista, the 10-year-old European Studies major at De La Salle University.

Dino Villanueva, who shot a measly 28 points on the Negros Occidental Golf Club (formerly Montevista) Wednesday, failed to count again for TCC after scoring 29.

Another pro-sold Canlubang scorer Rogerio Zaragoza III, just three outs in his first eight holes, picked up eight shots in the final 11 for 25 points and likewise did not count.

The Championship Division last teamed into a dead heat after last 36 holes as Alabang stood 31 points off the lead after posting just 110 for a 227 aggregate, with Sherwood Hills (-6 net/8 after a 90) for 170.

"Tiki'an ang laway ko for four cup," TCC coach Hong Lopez said. "If we can maintain that lead or any level with them going into the last day then we might have a chance to win this."

Thirty-round action will still be at Binitin, an old, whalebone course where Bacolod are faced with cell town, with the PAGCC hosting 8- and-round action.

"We just didn't play well today," Canlubang manager Luigi Yalo said. "We might play the same lineup tomorrow (today) and see if we can get something out of them."

The 30-year-old Alinlao, who will play his first pro tournament in the ECH leg of three-wood Hills on March 17, highlighted his blazing eight-hole stretch with an eagle on the 329-yard, par-4 second hole, where he drove his green and left himself with a 15-foot putt which he sunned.

He gunned down three more birdies to conclude the 2-9 one-old Binitin.

Gone at the 9400CC, Southwoods, a Championship Division contender when it had players like Antonio Marchiano and Angelo Quintendel 134 points for 242 and a six-point lead over defending champion Del Monte in the Standard Division.

Chrepe Bailey carded 36 points and Field Commodore chipped in 35 for Southwoods, which also drew 34 from Miggy Yee and 29 from former junior world champ Jil Simon.

Jed Mendoza was passed by Clyde Mondilla's 34 and their 203 of veterans Reyang Abbu Jil Mendoza and Benny Abanes contributed 33 each for Del Monte.

Second-round scores:

CHAMPIONSHIP—TCC 108-134-242, Canlubang 108-127-235, Alabang 97-110-207, Sherwood Hills 110-60-170, Del Monte 101-69-170, Mt. Malarayat 101-61-162, Luisita Inc 103 (74-29), Negros Occidental 104 (69-35), Binitin Golf 104 (74-30), Southwoods 104 (69-35), Manila Golf 104 (74-30), Valle Verde 104 (74-30), Wack Wack 104 (74-30), Manila Southwoods 104 (74-30), Riviera 104 (74-30), Camp Aguinaldo 104 (74-30), Puerto Azul 104 (74-30), Mimosa 104 (74-30), Apo Golf 104 (74-30), Tagaytay Highlands 104 (74-30), Wack Wack 104 (74-30), Manila Golf 104 (74-30), Valle Verde

SPORTS

Djokovic advances as Murray stumbles

DUBAI—WORLD NUMBER TWO NOVAK Djokovic recovered from a set down to defeat fellow Serb Viktor Troicki, 3-6, 6-4, 6-2, in the second round of the Dubai Championships on Wednesday.

But third seed Andy Murray slumped to a shock 7-6, 4-6, 6-4 defeat by Serb Janko Tipsarevic and fourth seed Nikolay Davydenko had to serve with a wrist injury while trailing German Michael Berrer, 6-3.

Former Australian Open finalist 20-WD-friend Tsonga, seeded fifth, also were down, 7-5, 6-3, to Croatian Ivan Ljubicic.

Djokovic struggled to adjust to the subzero heat, having won a eight-time first-round tussle with Spain's Guillermo Garcia-Lopez on Monday.

Troicki took the first set after breaking his childhood friend's serve in the first and ninth games, but Djokovic responded, dropping only one point on his first serve in the second set.

Djokovic raced into a 4-0 final-set lead, eventually clinching victory with a big serve. He will play Ljubicic in Thursday's quarter-finals.

Russian Davydenko looked out of sorts against Berrer, losing the first set 6-3, having battled back from a set down on Tuesday to get into the last 16.

Berrer will now play Marcos Baghdatis after the Cypriot defeated Indian qualifier Somdev Devvarman, 6-3, 3-6, 6-3.

Austrian Jurgen Melzer beat Spaniard Tommy Robredo, 6-3, 7-5, to earn a clash with Marin Cilic, who beat countryman Ivo Ivo Karlovic, 6-2, 7-6.

Croatian Cilic was rarely at his best, making only 47 percent of first serves, but his opponent exhibited all progressing beyond the quarter-final stage, having won two tournaments already this year.

"With winning a lot, you are believing in yourself," the 21-year-old said. Reuters

UTAH Jazz's Carlos Boozer dunks past Charlotte Bobcats' Tyrus Thomas in their NBA game Wednesday

Mavs subdue Kobe, Lakers

Magic shoot down Rockets

DALLAS—THE DALLAS MAVERICKS overcame the absence of Caron Butler to beat the Los Angeles Lakers, 101-96, on Wednesday in a clash of NBA division-al leaders, extending their NBA winning run to five games.

Butler, a key part of a seven-player trade with Washington this month, missed the game because of a bad reaction to medication. Without Butler, Dirk Nowitzki and Jason Terry picked up the slack by scoring 23 of the Mavericks' final 25 points. Nowitzki finished with 31 and Terry with 30.

Los Angeles' Kobe Bryant scored 30 points and moved into 13th place on the career scoring list. Bryant, who passed Reggie Miller, has 25,298 points.

Bryant missed a 3-pointer that could have tied it with 25 seconds left.

Magic 110, Rockets 92

In Houston, Dwight Howard was 11 for 11 from the field and had 30 points and 15 rebounds to help Orlando beat Houston.

Howard scored all of his points in the last three quarters, as he sat out almost the entire first period after committing two quick fouls. He had his 39th straight double-double to break a tie with Shaquille O'Neal for the franchise record.

Spurs 91, Thunder 87

In San Antonio, Manu Ginobili scored 26 points and made a spectacular block on Kevin Durant's would-be dunk late in the fourth quarter, leading San Antonio over Oklahoma City.

Ginobili's crucial block in the final minutes helped stop Durant's streak of scoring 25 points or more in 29 games. Durant had 24 points and 12 rebounds.

Tim Duncan had 19 points and 15 rebounds for the Spurs.

Trail Blazers 101, Raptors 87

In Toronto, Andre Miller had 18 points, 10 assists and seven rebounds to lead Portland over Toronto.

Brandon Roy added 23 points for the Trail Blazers.

Hedo Turkoglu scored 24 points for the Raptors who failed to top 100 points for the first time in 21 games—a streak that had extended back to Jan. 6. AP

COMPLETE RESULTS: Hornets 101, Lakers 96; Magic 110, Rockets 92; Spurs 91, Thunder 87; Trail Blazers 101, Raptors 87; Jazz 92, Kings 83; Bulls 110, Grizzlies 95; Suns 108, Timberwolves 102; Bobcats 102, Pistons 94; Knicks 96, Wizards 94; Clippers 97, Pacers 91

Verdasco, Venus barge into Mexican Open quarterfinals

ACAPULCO, MEXICO—TOP-SEEDED Fernando Verdasco and Venus Williams both reached the quarterfinals of the Mexican Open with straight-set wins on Wednesday.

Spain's Verdasco beat Poland's Lukasz Kubot, 6-4, 6-3, while Williams won a 6-4, 6-4 victory over Russia's Ekaterina Makarova.

The second-seeded players in both the men's and women's draw also advanced. Fernando Gonzalez of Chile defeated Victor Hanescu of Romania, 7-6 (2), 3-6, 6-1, and Agnes Szavay of Hungary beat Renata Voracova of the Czech Republic, 7-5, 6-1.

Spain's Verdasco beat Poland's Lukasz Kubot, 6-4, 6-3, while Williams won a 6-4, 6-4 victory over Russia's Ekaterina Makarova.

The second-seeded players in both the men's and women's draw also advanced. Fernando Gonzalez of Chile defeated Victor Hanescu of Romania, 7-6 (2), 3-6, 6-1, and Agnes Szavay of Hungary beat Renata Voracova of the Czech Republic, 7-5, 6-1.

Defending champion Williams led 4-0 in the first set, but lost four straight games against the 90th-ranked Rus-sian.

Verdasco will face Juan Monaco of Argentina, who beat countryman Juan Ignacio Chela, 6-4, 7-6 (5).

The Chilean will next be up against Eduardo Schwank of Argentina, who beat Germany's Simon Greul, 7-6 (4), 6-1.

No. 3 David Nalbandian of Spain also advanced, beating Thomaz Bellucci of Brazil, 6-4, 6-1. Another Spaniard, Juan Carlos Ferrero, also advanced, beating Russian Igor Andreev, 6-4, 6-3.

Two-time defending champion Nicolas Almagro of Spain made it to the last eight by edging Eduard Gargani of Monaco 2-6, 7-5, 7-6 (7).

In another women's match, Gisela Dulko of Argentina defeated Barbora Zahlavova Strycova, 7-5, 6-1. AP

Ochoa shares lead at HSBC Women's Champions golfest

OCHOA

SINGAPORE—WORLD NO. 1 Lorena Ochoa shot a 4-under 68 for a share of the lead after the first round of the HSBC Women's Champions in Singapore.

Americans Angela Stanford and Cristie Kerr also Hee Young Park also had 68s in the $1.3 million event at the Tanah Merah Country Club.

Ochoa got off to a fast start, shooting three birdies in a row on the front nine. The Mexican cooled off as wind picked up, leading to two bogeys before birdies on two of the last three holes.

Four players were one shot off the lead, including Ha Ji Hyeonsoo of Japan, who won last week's season-opening LPGA Thailand.

Kerr got off to a rough start, with bogeys on two of the first three holes, but she finished with a flourish, birdieing five of the last six holes to finish with a 33 on the back nine.

Last year's winner Jiyai Shin of South Korea shot a 1-under 71 while American Michelle Wie was four strokes from the leaders after a 72.

Singapore's 18-year-old Jazy Poh, who won an amateur tournament to qualify, was on last place after an 82. AP

SPORTS EXPO: Chief Justice Renato Puno (fifth from left) leads yesterday's ribbon-cutting ceremonies of the Allie Sports Expo at the Pinoy Equine Stadium. Flanking him are Philippine Sports Commission chair Harry Angping and Rep. Maria Zenaida Angping. With them are (from left) Asia's long jump queen Marestella Torres, Globalink CEO Fenrin Tan, Globalink COO Greg Lugarda, Philippine Sportswriters Association president Teddy's Manzanero of Inquirer and world female billiards champion Rubilen Amit.

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

INVITATION TO BID

DESCRIPTION	Approved Budget for the Contract	Non-Refundable Fee	Delivery Period
Two (2) Yard Computer Management Center Servers for Land Bank Plaza Towers Accounting Center, Makati Complex, Office Equipment Lot/Lot, etc.	Php 36,100,000.00	Php 10,000.00	Within two (2) years after receipt of Purchase Order

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	February 25, 2010 to March 16, 2010
2. Pre-bid Conference	March 8, 2010, 10:00 AM Procurement Department, 20th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, 1598 M.H. del Pilar cor. Dr. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila
3. Opening of Bids	March 16, 2010, 10:00 a.m.
4. Bid Evaluation	March 16, 2010
5. Post-qualification	March 17, 2010
6. Notice of Award	March 30, 2010

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

S. Korea disqualification hands China Olympic short track gold

VANCOUVER—KIM SUNWOO TU dropped her South Korea on Wednesday when their victory lap was cut short by news of their disqualification giving China the Olympic gold in the women's short track 3,000 meters relay.

South Korea's dancers had already started waving flags to jay after crossing the line ahead of the rest of the field but a referee review decided Kim Min-jung had impeded during an exchange push with just a few laps remaining.

Canada took the silver, with the United States picking up the bronze.

Cheers turned to tears as the team—middle South Korean rushed past reporters without stopping to explain their mistake and lead coach Chin Hyung-lok hammered his fists on a padded barrier in frustration and shouted at the referee.

He was angry that it was the same Australian official in charge, James Hewitt, who had triggered outrage in South Korea when he disqualified Kim Dong-sung in the 1,500 final at the 2002 Games after he had crossed the line first.

"It was out of my control what the judges made their decision. The team referee is from Australia and he misjudged it when Kim Dong-sung was skating and disqualified. It was the same referee," Chin told reporters.

"There was no crash between the bodies or body contact so I have no clue why we were disqualified. There are no regulations to appeal a disqualification so I have to accept it."

Disqualifications are common in the sport, where skaters jostle for position while turning tight corners.

"I was not surprised by the disqualification. It's because collision happen all the time in short track," Wang Meng, who won China a medal in 2006 four years ago when she was judged to have impeded a skater.

China stood on top of the podium with Zhang Hui sprinting a big valedictorian over a cut on her chin.

The Chinese have dominated the women's events in Vancouver, winning three out of three with individual golds for Wang in the 500 meters and Zhou Yang in the 1,500 meters.

China's first Olympic relay gold came in a world record time of four minutes 5.616 seconds, thanks to a team lineup featuring Sun Linlin, Yang Zhang and Zhou.

With six laps remaining, the fourth team trailing the Chinese and closing in on exchange thought they could overtake but Kim cut across Sun's path while trying to make the pass. Reuters

A SOUTH Korean skater reacts after her team was disqualified. The Chinese are in the background.

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■ **Corporate bond issues** surged in '09 to P411.8B /B6

Editor Raul D. Maralit • Assistant Editor Carmi S. Mariano

BUSINESS

IN THIS ISSUE
■ **Philip Morris,** Fortune soon to integrate operations /B5

RP imports jumped 17% to $3.89B in Dec.

Trade deficit stood lower at $4.669B in 2009

By Russel W. Dumlao

PHILIPPINE IMPORTS IN DECEMBER SURGED 17.9 PERcent over the same month in 2008 in what analysts said was another sign the economy was recovering.

But throughout 2009, the country's import bill fell by 24.2 percent to $40 billion. As a result, the Bureau of Cus-

tons aimed its target revenue by P46 billion.

Based on the National Statistics Of-

fice's latest report on external trade, the total value of goods shipped in and out dropped by 23.1 percent to $61.336 billion from $79.824 billion in 2008.

The trade balance in 2009 settled at a deficit of $4.669 billion—59 percent less than the $7.669-billion deficit registered the previous year.

BP INFOBITS A4

UNION OF EQUALS Foreign Affairs Minister Alexander Yetsko (left), Christopher Hobson, Harry Tzu Sr., and Sakuko Hitsuzin join hands to form up the union of Fortune Tobacco Corp. and Philip Morris Manufacturing Inc. during a press conference in Shangri-La Makati. (See related stories on Page 2.)

Law for gated communities

THIS IS THE TIME OF THE YEAR when most homeowners' associations in residential areas (or gated communities, as sophisticated people prefer to call it) in the country hold their annual election of directors of trustees.

Media ads like this [illegible] pile just within the correct, these officers are expected to get special attention or assistance from local candidates.

Who will be invited to dialogue with the homeowners or issues or whose opposition will be allowed in he put up to common areas within the village are matters usually decided by these officers.

This political "clout" is in addition to their access to the funds and resources of the village which, depending on the financial standing of its residents, often run into millions of pesos.

In this reason, homeowners' elections have become hotly contested events that are weakened with the same intensity as corporate takeover battles that recently hit the headlines.

That problem, among others, is sought to be addressed by Republic Act No. 9904, also known as the "Magsaysay Board on the Homeowners and Homeowners' Associations," which was enacted into law early this year.

Registration

A key element of the law is the documentation of the incoming and Land Use Regulatory Board as the government agency that can grant juridical personality to these associations and regulate their activities.

The juridical status is acquired by the simple expedient of registering with HLURB.

A similar personality earlier acquired by similar organizations through their filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission or Home Insurance Guaranty Corp. shall be required of the registrant with HLURB when the law takes effect.

To resolve the issue on contentious issue of membership, the law provides that only lot owners, legal occupants (lessees or authorized users) and informal settlers who are in the process of being award

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Bose opens its first Concept Store in Greenbelt 5 Makati

The Mind Museum pursues more exhibits with new donors

Board (L-R): BAP trustee Charlie Ballos, managing director of Shell Pilipinas Exploration Jerome Pennefather Philippines Consortium, BAP director Raul Fernando Zobel, Sony Ericsson Mobile Communications general manager Steven Manasse, Oasis Langdon & Boat Pilot, joyce Arnold, Arch. Lor Calma; Standing (L-R): Vision BAP president Nemo Araos, Comm executive director Amy Darwin Meriano and vice president Paul Brosius, J.A. Campbell & Associates Kerry Lopez, VP & GM of PMOM, for Makiapogo Consortium Rhodo Mateo, Shell Electronic vice president Dwight Tatlonio, Meridrosh Pilo, managing director for the consortium Hong, BAP Foundation Tony Aquino, Sony Ericsson Pedro Lyangco, The Mind Museum's managing director Penny Bley Secretary Phelan ATD – BAP's Charlie Ballos, Fernando Zobel, and Tony Aquino with ABS-CBN's president Ms. Charo Santos-Concio, vice president & head of corporate communications Bing Rivera, and head of customer marketing group Tony Villareal

Tuesday, February 23, 2010

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

As of February 25, 2010

CURRENCIES

February 25, 2010 Country	Unit	Cash Equivalent	Bank Buy Rate	Bank Sell Rate
United States	dollar	1.00	46.1000	46.1000
Japan	100	1.00	51.1000	51.1000
United Kingdom	Pound	1.00	71.1000	71.1000
Hong Kong	dollar	1.00	5.9000	5.9000
Switzerland	Franc	1.00	43.1000	43.1000
Canada	dollar	1.00	43.1000	43.1000
Singapore	dollar	1.00	33.1000	33.1000
Australia	dollar	1.00	41.1000	41.1000
Thailand	Baht	1.00	1.4000	1.4000
Taiwan	New $	1.00	1.4000	1.4000
South Korea	Won	100	4.1000	4.1000
Brunei	dollar	1.00	33.1000	33.1000
Indonesia	Rupiah	100	0.5000	0.5000
Thailand	Baht	1.00	1.4000	1.4000
UAE	Dirham	1.00	12.5000	12.5000
EU	Euro	1.00	63.1000	63.1000
Kuwait	Dinar	1.00	159.1000	159.1000
China	Yuan	1.00	6.7000	6.7000
Denmark	Krone	1.00	8.5000	8.5000
India	Rupee	1.00	0.9000	0.9000
Malaysia	Ringgit	1.00	13.1000	13.1000
Norway	Krone	1.00	7.5000	7.5000
Saudi Arabia	Riyal	1.00	12.3000	12.3000
Sweden	Krona	1.00	5.8000	5.8000

Shares close up

Previous page B1

The main-share Philippine Stock Exchange index gained 10.12 points or 1.68 percent to close at 3,011.26.

The property sector benefited the most as it ended advanced by about 3.3 percent.

There were 66 advances against 21 decliners, while 39 stocks were unchanged. Value turnover improved to P2.6 billion.

Investors stepped up shares of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., Bello Corp., Universal Robina Corp., SM Investments Corp., Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., Century Peak Metal Holdings Corp., Petroenergy Resources Corp., Bank of the Philippine Islands, ayala Land Inc., Alliance Global Group Inc., and Manila Electric Co.

Doris C. Dumlao

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	Current Week Ended Feb. 26, 2010	Last Week Ended Feb. 19, 2010
Bond Fund - Peso	1.41871	1.41539
Managed Fund - Peso	2.10000	2.09835
Growth Fund - Peso	1.70118	1.70048
Equity Fund - Peso	0.83000	0.82708
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.01994	1.00729
Balanced Return Fund I	1.10000	1.11044
Balanced Return Fund II	1.00000	1.00117
Dollar Fund - Peso	1.01000	1.00917
Money Market Fund - Peso	1.00100	1.00087

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BUSINESS *Friday*

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Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

HBC wants to end 2010 with close to 230 store customers.

HBC goes after 'happy, beautiful customers'

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

HBC's Rosalinda A. Herrainz

MOVIE STARS, POLITICIANS and the well-heeled are not the only ones who deserve a makeover, manage to resist luxurious pampering after a long and hard day at work.

Waiters, office clerks, sales girls, policemen, daily commuters and students certainly do, too, and they are among the major markets that beauty and personal care product manufacturers and distributors HBC is going after in a big way this year.

With a 2010 campaign slogan "happy beautiful customers," HBC president Rosalinda Ang-Herrainz says one of the growing company's goals is to beef up its makeover stores to HBC Benches in distributor store POints to such services in a facial, diamond peel and even makeup.

"The makeover centers have always been there, but these were not aggressively pushed. That is what we are going to do this year in our stores. Our vision that everyone deserves to feel beautiful," Herrainz told the INQUIRER.

MARKETING STRATEGY

Under its campaign, buyers only need to buy P300 worth of HBC products and they are automatically entitled to a free facial in the store. A purchase of P800 is enough for a diamond peel, while those who buy a hair coloring product can have it applied inside the store.

"We have always believed that each customer is special, and so are we in create a beautiful experience for them when they come to our stores. If customers feel that they are happy and beautiful after each visit, then you have made a great job," said Herrainz.

These services will serve both HBC and customers well.

By offering these value-added services, HBC hopes to attract more and loyal customers to its 217 stores all over the country who want to leave the store with more than just the products they bought. Customers, on the other hand, get more for the same amount of their hard-earned money.

Services do vary across regions as preferences are not the same.

In northern Luzon, for instance, which is the fastest growing region for HBC, there is greater demand for hair products, especially dyes, with black, but purely chestnut, mahogany and dark brown as the

HBC's Rosalinda A. Herrainz

more popular colors.

In the Visayas and Mindanao, on the other hand, the best sellers are beauty products like makeup.

In Metro Manila, where 60 stores are located, there is tending by any difference in all categories, such as advertising products, and well.

Herrainz says reserving to the mass market augurs well for HBC's growth prospects this year since it accounts for the bulk of the buyers of personal care and beauty products.

HBC defines its market as mostly women aged 18-45 years old, consumers with salaries ranging from P15,000 to P25,000 a month.

The beauty chain that counts in years is the Hermkeo Watsons stores ended 2009 with an estimated 215 stores and is eyeing to end 2010 with a double-digit growth and at least 20 more stores, mainly in the provinces.

Over the next three years, HBC is looking at a network of 500 stores here and abroad—mostly company-owned. Others will be handled by franchisees willing to invest P250,000 for a 2x2 square meter cart, P950,000 for a 4x4 square-meter kiosk, and between 0% million and P4 million for a full store.

Herrainz says HBC will give special attention to women in Philippine workers who want to fall back on a business and want to join to HBC's campaign to make every Filipino look and feel beautiful.

NEW Zealand Ambassador Andrew Matheson (left) turns over a check worth NZ$1,250 to San Miguel Corp. president and chief operating officer Ramon S. Ang as donation to the New Zealand Embassy for San Miguel Foundation's various leading programs.

Action steps for marketers

Despite slowdown, keep spending on ads

By Roger Pe
Contributor

IT'S time for companies to come up with fresh advertising ideas to help their brand stand out from the rest.

WHAT'S ECONOMIC RECOVERY got to do with advertising? Plenty.

Resurrection of creativity, for one. By creativity, we mean relevant yet fresh, one that does what advertising was originally intended to do: sell.

We do not mean arrogant creativity that alienates the audience it is supposed to be talking to.

We mean creativity that speaks your language, not something jargons meant only for award judges. We mean creativity that is effective.

While creativity should still first and foremost, we don't mean boring creativity either. We need creativity that lifts our smile in a wise level just as world-class body.

Enough of "Sin Tos, Buy 3Is" syndrome, done to bold, screaming headlines that dirty taste.

We should see less of logos made as headlines and repeated to ad nauseam.

Benefits and insights

We need to hear more of product benefits and insights executed in interesting, arresting ways. We'd like to see creativity racing through the formula: is clichés. We mean effective advertising that is creative.

Today's consumers are smarter than you think and, as they say, kids can tell. In selling, marketers can easily fall into the trap of overkill and get tempted to use existing conventional genres. As a result, they reap their own egocentrism ignored and perceived as low quality by target market.

Economic downturns have brought many reap may come from lame marketing strategies' bag of tricks. Use of endorsers, for example, in lieu of a good idea. Do consumers really believe celebrities are or consume the brand they are endorsing? Research results could prove otherwise.

Hundreds of studies have been conducted proving companies that maintained advertising during recessions experienced growth. Ad investors Roland S. Tolle tracked down 200 companies to 1923 and reported in the Harvard Business Review. the biggest sales increases were clocked up by companies that advertised the most during that recession period.

Yahoo World Bite O, Burbon Advertising Inc. decided to plot the sales of a large number of advertisers through successive recessions. In 1947, a began measuring the annual advertising expenditures of each company. When they correlated the figures with sales and profit trends before, during and after the recessions of 1948, 1954, 1960 and 1961, they found that almost without exception sales and profits dropped off at companies that cut back on advertising. Their studies also revealed that after the recession ended, those companies continued to lag behind the ones that had maintained their advertising budgets," the Bureau further reported.

Increased budget

There are many examples of businesses benefiting from increased ad budgeting in a recession. AT Pearce Barnes and Kraft Salad Dressing increased their advertising and experienced sales growth of 57percent and 78 percent respectively during the 1969-1951 recession. During that time, most of the lines industry cut budgets, but Coors right and Bud light increased theirs and saw sales jump 15 percent and 16 percent, respectively. Among fast-food chains, Pizza Hut sales rose 61 percent and Taco Bell's 68 percent thanks to strong advertising support, reducing McDonald's sales by some 28 percent. Marketfitness concluded."

Things to do

Now, having set the groundwork, The Clark Company offers these action steps for marketers:

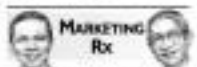
Don't cut your ad budget. Increase it. Let your competitors cut theirs. When you increase your spending, you increase your share of voice. If your competitors cut back, your message grows even stronger.

Develop a strategic marketing plan so you don't waste money advertising the wrong message to the wrong place at the wrong audience.

Don't "cheapen" your advertising by trying to save on creative or production costs. Your customers will notice and worry about quality. This is a time to stress quality and value.

Maintain continuity to sustain awareness. Advertising works cumulatively so you have to remind people consistently about your brand or they'll forget you.

Measuring ad tagline effectiveness



Consumers can be affected by ad materials even if they are not really paying attention to them

Q: WE'RE A BOUTIQUE AD AGENCY AND we've had a fair number of "successful" ad taglines. When pitching for new accounts, we have been challenged by advertisers especially large ones to give numerical "proofs" that our proposed ad taglines are effective. Your column (last week) helped us how to better explain the way ad taglines work on consumers' minds. Only we were told that this is appreciated but still asked for our "effectiveness metrics" or research.

Can you help us handle this challenge? What sort of research can we present to clients to validate effectiveness?

A: There are a host of research methods for doing this. Most are variations of association tests. Let's focus on one that has worked well with our own clients. This is Harvard Professor Gerald Zaltman and his ZMET (or Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique).

ZMET is a qualitative projective technique that first asks consumers to talk about their thoughts and feelings about using a certain product. This is after they've chosen photos and pictures they associate with their use of the product being subjected to ZMET. The trained ZMET facilitator discusses with a respondent the meanings behind the photos. This is with the end in view of uncovering the respondent's inner feelings toward the product.

Whassup! connection

Here's an example from Professor Zaltman's latest 2008 ZMET book, Marketing Metaphoria. What's being ZMET-ed here were Budweiser's TV ad with the memorable tagline, "Whassup!" The TVC showed four guys on couch holding a Budweiser bottle and screaming "Whassup!" into their phones.

When the ad copy-test respondents were asked to select and bring pictures they associated with the Whassup! TVC, pictures of "children in a playground, adults playing touch football, mountain climbers supporting one another, and school of fish" were brought. From the discussion each respondent regarding the connection that each respondents saw between the photo and the Whassup! TVC and Budweiser, Zaltman inferred that Budweiser consumers found a "deep metaphor" about friendship and social connectedness in the Whassup! TVC. This inference eventually jumped to the core and higher level consultation that "the brand owns the deep metaphor—and Budweiser owns connection."

That respondents' verbatims are ZMET's "proofs" and inferences/conclusions for its conclusion. Take this quotation from one respondent as proof of the connectedness conclusion: "The fact that all five guys in this commercial were drinking the same beer makes you wonder whether they become friends because they all liked that particular brand of beer." As can be expected, those who have gotten used to quantitative statistics that can be tested for statistical significance have great discomfort with this kind of inference-drawing. However, ZMET advocates have invoked the technique's convincing "successful" applications and satisfied clients as basis for its validation.

How does the preceding translate in terms of your question about effectiveness research? What sort of research will prove that, for example, the Whassup! commercial is effective?

Before and after

A simple before-and-after research design can serve the purpose. Hint: the cost by first getting the consumers' feelings about beer, budweiser and friends. Then expose the Whassup! ad. Next, ask respondents to collect photos or pictures that they associate with the Whassup! commercial and Budweiser. Finally, ask respondents to bring their gathered photos to an FGD session or individually discuss the meaning/s/ons of each one's selected photo/s. The unbiased feelings before and after the TVC exposure should yield clues about how the TVC may have changed the respondents' deeper associations toward the Whassup! ad.

Disadvantages

This is not for us the science of measurement has gone for a ride during ad copy and with specific reference to ad taglines. Any attempt at measuring ad tagline effectiveness is challenged by at least two disadvantages. The first is that most advertisers and ad agencies regard ad taglines as "sum totals" in the execution of more substantive ad copy strategy.

So why bother with the side dish? Secondly, we say that taglines' effectiveness is better measured in its encounters as subconscious efforts. In other words, consumers are affected even when they are not paying attention.

In fine, advertisers as well as ad agencies must admit that there are two basic categories of ads. There are ads that do their best work in the consumers' consciousness and there are so many that do best in the consumers' unconscious. The until there is acceptance of this categorization of ads will we find acceptance of either during ad copy element like the tagline as a copy strategy in its own right. Therefore, it's not true as base of having a metric or research of effectiveness. That's secondary. It's the concept of an ad or an ad element that consumers' like after rather than think after which is the larger and more basic issue.

Keep your questions coming. Send them to us at drandmarketing@gmail.com or jdr@inquirer.net. God bless!

Gov't reports 44% rise in '09 net borrowings

By Raoul W. Dumlao

Foreign, local bond issues bloated yearend figure

THE GOVERNMENT POSTED last year a 44-percent increase in its net borrowings to P229.4 billion from P160.1 billion in 2008, the Bureau of the Treasury said.

This was mainly due to the big jump in foreign loans tapped by the government during the year to P151.4 billion from only P73.8 billion a year ago.

Global bonds issued in 2009 reached P134.9 billion, including the P15 billion in P71.29 billion raised from the first-tranche January and $750 million or P36.87 billion in July.

In 2008, the government raised P30.28 billion from the sale of dollar-denominated bonds.

Also, the government availed itself of P96.8 billion in official development assistance last year, up by 109 percent from P46.23 billion in 2008.

Further, the government borrowed last year a total of P121.9 billion from domestic lenders, decreasing by nopoints from P429.3 billion a year ago.

The decrease was due partly to a net redemption of treasury bills amounting to P145.4 billion.

Another factor was a bond swap made in January 2009 worth P105.56 billion and which involved assuming few and several near-benchmark bonds.

The government doubled out 998.9 billion in payments for foreign loans, an increase of 21 percent from P80.5 billion.

At the same time, it paid P194.5 billion in domestic debts, 6-percent lower than the P208.6 billion settled a year ago.

In December alone are here, cosings for P21.7 billion, up 126 percent from P9.2 billion posted in 2008.

Contributing to debts in December were the P13.4-billion package from the Asian Development Bank and the issuance of P5.7-1 billion worth of treasury bonds.

In December, the government borrowed a total of P32.2 billion, including P12.9 billion from foreign sources and P19.3 billion from domestic investors.

The month's total was 49.6 percent more than the year-ago level of P21.4 billion—P6.7 billion from abroad and P14.9 billion from local lenders.

At the same time, the government paid a total of P105.5 billion in November—P5.7 billion in foreign loans and P6.8 billion in domestic debts.

The month's total payments was 14.6 percent less than the P123.5 billion paid in the same month of 2008.

PCSO stopped from issuing wireless lotto deals

THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT OF QUEZON CITY has stopped state-owned Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office from awarding any new contract for wireless lotto betting upon the petition of technology solutions provider DPBH Inc.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, DPBH said it had obtained a 20-day temporary order of protection (TRO) preventing the PCSO from awarding any contract for wireless betting while DPBH itself was in the midst of seeking a preliminary injunction against the PCSO.

DPBH is commencing arbitration proceedings to recover the costs the company said it incurred in equipment it bought in accordance with the PCSO deed April 9, 2003, under which the 27 company was supposed to provide the government supervision with the wireless technology for nationwide lotto betting.

In the order dated Feb. 24, the court said "PCSO is hereby restrained from doing any act that would impair the rights of the petitioner which may lead to irreparable loss or injury to it pure."

The injunction sought by DPBH was filed amid reports that the PCSO was considering a proposal from Internet company Philweb Group to implement a nationwide wireless lotto betting system.

Dona C. Dandan

Philip Morris, Fortune soon to integrate operations

By Abigail L. Ho

AFTER SIGNING A DEAL TO FORM THE country's new tobacco powerhouse, Philip Morris Fortune Tobacco Corp. Inc. (PMFTC), the two partners in the "marriage" are now working toward gradually integrating their operations.

Set to begin operations Philip Morris Philippines Manufacturing Inc. managing director Christopher Bibon said that at the time, both firms would maintain status quo in terms of operations.

"Everybody will operate as is. We will continue manufacturing in our Batangas plant and Fortune will continue production in Manila but that doesn't preclude what will happen in the future," he said.

Bibon said there was no concrete solution yet of how long the transition would be, given that the companies had just signed the agreement.

Asked how the eventual integration of the two companies' operations would affect employees, he said the workers would remain where they are, and no movement would be forthcoming, at least in the meantime.

"We're still in the process of evaluating. We can't make any comment or judgment yet on whether or not there will be redundancies. We'll judge as we go along, but as we said, employees are a key asset to us," Bibon explained.

He also said that the two parties in the "union" would continue to maintain separate personalities. The deal was about forming an entirely new company altogether, and not a merger, which would entail the survival of one entity and the dissolution of the other.

With the establishment of PMFTC, he said Philip Morris would maintain its export business, while Fortune Tobacco would continue to service its commercial markets having obligations.

The new company however, would take care of the manufacture, distribution, sales and marketing of all Philip Morris and Fortune Tobacco brands in the domestic market.

Under the agreement, both firms contributed selected assets and liabilities into the new company, with each party holding equal economic interests. PMFTC's chairman will be Jose Ma. Lucio Tan and would have Bibon as president. Tan's youngest brother, Harry Tan Jr., would sit on the board of the new firm.

Combining Philip Morris' strength in the high-end markets and Fortune Tobacco's dominance in the mass-end segment, PMFTC now holds a 90-percent share of the domestic tobacco market.

Gokongwei bank buying RBS unit in RP

By Doris C. Dandan

THE GOKONGWEI HAVE STRUCK A DEAL to acquire the local commercial banking unit of bailed-out Royal Bank of Scotland (NYSE: rbs), which has put up some major businesses for sale as part of its downsizing.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, JG Summit Holdings Inc. said its unit Robinsons Savings Bank had signed a share purchase agreement with The Royal Bank of Scotland Group plc and the local bank of Scotland NV for the latter's shares in RBS (Philippines) Inc.

The value of the deal was not disclosed. The RBS group has a small commercial bank presence in the country as it earlier acquired the license and remaining assets of Ansbacher (Overseas) Bank, ABN Amro Bank, The Philippine unit has about P5.1 billion worth of resources and P2.9 billion in stockholders' equity.

The acquisition of RBS and its commercial banking license will pave the way for the upgrading of Robinsons Bank's operations from thrift banking to commercial banking.

From page B1

Corporate Securities Info

ed lot or housing ownership rights are eligible to join the association.

A two-way arrangement to surmount between the association and its members. A memorandum has this end, to make loans to members services and use common areas and facilities on condition that he pays the association's fees and charges.

And to safeguard the disbursement of these funds, the law states that a member has the right "to inspect association books and records during office hours and to make copies thereof, upon written request with annual reports, including financial statements."

What's more, the association is required to prepare its audited financial statement yearly and, within 90 days from the end of its accounting period, post a copy in its office, bulletin board or other conspicuous places within the community, and submit a copy to HLURB.

With regard to the qualifications of directors or trustees and the manner of their election, the law leaves them matters to the association's by-laws, as approved by HLURB.

Although association are given leeway in the performance of their duties and responsibilities, the removal of directors or trustees is treated differently—it has to done along the lines of the "recall" procedures presently being used in elected local officials.

A director or trustee may be removed for any of the causes stated in the by-laws upon the signed petition, subject to HLURB's validation, of majority of the members in good standing.

Within 60 days from such removal, the board is obliged to call a meeting to fill up the vacancy for the remaining term of the ousted board member.

For the same causes, the entire board may be dissolved if two-thirds of the association members sign a petition, subject to HLURB's validation, for that purpose.

If this happens, HLURB is required, within 60 days, to call and conduct a new election to fill up the vacated positions for their unexpired terms of

During the election of new officers, an interim board can be named to run the affairs of the community.

Sanctions

The law spells out in detail the rights, duties and responsibilities of the association in relation to the homeowners and vice versa.

The most significant aspect of the enumeration is the treatment of the position of director or trustee as fiduciary in character and therefore requires the exercise of the degree of care and loyalty needed in the work.

There is, however, a limit in this scenario. The director or trustee has to live up to these standards at his own cost or expense because the law prohibits the payment of compensation for his services.

In the enforcement and implementation of the law, HLURB is empowered to hear and decide administrative disputes or controversies.

If any person intentionally, or by gross negligence, fails to perform his duties under the law or violates the rights of the members, he may be ordered to pay a fine of not less than P5,000 but not more than P50,000, and be punished criminally. Disqualified from holding any position in the association.

All fines so due are without prejudice to the right of an aggrieved party to file civil or criminal actions with the regular courts for any incidental violation of the Revised Penal Code and other pertinent laws.

For feedback, please write to: realestate@inquirer.com.ph

Unified stand on sin tax issue seen

By Dazzle L. Lucas

ONCE BITTER RIVALS IN THE cigarette industry, Philip Morris (Philippines) Manufacturing Inc. and Fortune Tobacco Corp. are now expected to adopt a unified stand when it comes to the enforcement issue of taxation of the smuggled, low-price cigarettes.

In a briefing yesterday, the president of the newly created Philip Morris-Fortune Tobacco Co. (PMFTC), Chris Nelson, disclosed to reveal the exact stand that the unified firm would take in bringing the perfected act to avoid the strategy this early.

Observers believe, however, that PMFTC will eventually adopt the stance that sell the cheaper brands that sell in the cheaper brands that adopted by Fortune Tobacco, which is generally perceived to be more favorable to the manufacturing industry.

"We worked together with the government in 2004 which led to the excise tax law which has actually been beneficial and continues to be so," Nelson said. "It runs until 2013. Obviously, there are many things for us to look at."

Under the prevailing law, the tax rate for cigarettes stands at P20 per pack for premium cigarettes priced P11 and above, P10.26 per pack for high-priced cigarettes with one sold price of P6.50 up to P10.99 to P6.50 per pack for medium-priced cigarettes ranging at P6.20, and P2 per pack for cigarettes priced P6 and below.

The bill also provides an increase of 3.6 percent plus 16 centavos per pack every two years for all cigarette classes.

Because Fortune Tobacco specializes in manufacturing cigarettes for the lower-end market, it gave its lower tax rate than high-end product Philip Morris, despite the two now controlling two-thirds of the market.

The difference in taxation rates was a constant source between the two firms in the past, with more investors—especially from the so-called Northern Alliance of tobacco-producing provinces—siding with Fortune Tobacco.

Along with the taxes collected from the alcohol industry, the so-called "sin taxes" levied by the government amounted to to involve P81 billion yearly, making it one of the major sources of revenue for the state.

RP imports ...

From page B1

In December 2009, imports rose to $3.89 billion—an increase from the $3.5 billion posted a year earlier, the BSP said. Exports meanwhile rose 22.8 percent to $3.31 billion that same month.

Also, total trade in December rose by 20.8 percent to $7.204 billion from $5.976 billion of the same month in 2008. Overseas Bahrain of trade that month stood at a deficit of $570 million—better than the $626-million deficit in the same month of 2008.

In November, shipments grew by 7.3 percent from the $3.6 billion posted the previous month.

A rise in imports is considered positive because this indicates a similar movement in exports.

The strong performances in November could be taken as a signal that the economy is finally on the rebound, said Agri-Lee Tan of Citiservicelink.

"This is another indicator that supports the argument that we are recovering. Exports have actually picked up, overseas remittances are up, and consumer spending picked up in the fourth quarter," she said.

However, Jose Mahao of BF Capital Securities said the data should still be treated with caution.

"It's a sign of a slightly stronger economy, but ... it is not yet something to celebrate," he warned.

Mahao said the rise in becomes imports only looked strong because it was being compared to a low base in 2008.

The December figures marked the second month in a row the country's imports had risen. Before then, imports had not increased since September 2008, just before the world plummeted into a period of financial turmoil. With a report from AFP

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BUSINESS

Corporate bond issues surged in '09 to ₱411.8B

By Michelle V. Rosca

THE VALUE OF CORPORATE BONDS sold in the local market more than tripled in 2009, according to the latest data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

BSP data showed that corporate bonds sold last year amounted to ₱411.8 billion, surging by 159 percent from only ₱157.4 billion in 2008.

Some of the biggest bond issues last year were San Miguel Corp. (₱38 billion), Banco de Oro (₱30 billion), Metrobank (₱28 billion), Philippine National Bank (₱17 billion) and Manila Electric Co. (₱17 billion).

San Miguel tops list of issuers with P38B

Monetary officials said that last year, companies were still able to fund their operations, thus helping keep the economy afloat despite the worst global economic crisis in decades.

The increase in the amount of bonds sold also indicated that the domestic capital market was very liquid and still had appetite to invest despite the bleak business environment outside the country, the BSP said.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said, as said that the drop (in) in bond issuances was one reason behind the slowdown in the growth of bank lending in 2009.

Some companies raised funds through a bond sale, thereby reducing their demand for bank loans.

Tetangco said the slower growth in bank lending, therefore, should not be viewed as a signal of declining appetite for investments.

Data from the BSP showed that the loan portfolio of banks reached ₱2.1 trillion, up by 10 percent year-on-year.

Tetangco said the moderate rise in bank lending and the surge in corporate bond issuances handed the expansion of corporations in 2009 and helped the economy grow amid a contracting global economy.

The Philippines managed to raise its gross domestic product (GDP) by 0.9 percent last year, slower than the 3.8 percent in 2008, but better than most of its neighbors.

Banking industry players, however, said the slowdown in the growth of bank lending was partly due to the limit on the amount of loans a bank may extend to a single borrower.

NTC hit for 3G slot bid rules

By Paolo G. Montecillo

LOPEZ GEO BANAN Telecommunications firm has appealed the National Telecommunications Commission's plan to allow the three major mobile networks in the country to join the auction for the country's remaining third-generation (3G) frequency allocation.

In a statement, Bayan criticized the regulator's decision to set basic conditions on Globe Telecom and Digitel Mobile Philippines bid for the last 3G slot, giving the three firms a chance to bolster frequencies and block the entry of smaller players.

Competition

The company said allowing the three, which already had 3G frequency allocations, to join would stifle competition in the telecommunications sector.

"The NTC seems bent on proceeding with the auction and not allowing players who already have 3G licenses to participate. By doing so, NTC will be stifling competition by allowing big players to bound (to) monopolize (while) marginalizing niche players," Bayan vice-president for corporate bond and communications Jose Antonio Ilagan said in a statement.

Earlier, the NTC issued a draft rule allowing all telecommunications players to join the auction for the last 3G frequency, which would enable companies to offer high-value services such as mobile broadband Internet.

This was in contrast to a previous proposal that sought to have Smart, its subsidiary Connectivity Unlimited Resources Enterprise (Curo), Globe and Digitel from bidding for the allocation since these companies already have 3G frequencies. Bayan had also appealed for the last 3G slot, but the NTC rejected its bid.

CA case

Bayan's bid is pending case before the Court of Appeals seeking to force the NTC from bidding out the last 3G slot, which the company insists it should have won in the first place.

"NTC would further be in violation of global commitments (on) freedom and luxury of choosing the best provider for their needs if it ... grants Bayan, the 3G license," Ilagan said.

LIFESTYLE Fashion & Beauty

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CAROLINA HERRERA red riding hood pantsuit with cut straight-wide and wavy

THE SKINNY ON PANTS

Going wider, wider

By Larry Lonzo
Lifestyle

PUT YOUR SKINNY LOW-waist jeans and stretch pants in the very back of your closet. What's in nowadays are tailored pants, high-waisted, straightened and cropped at mid-calf. These new trousers come completely wide and ruffled at their

(more) C2

CAROLINA HERRERA'S sleeveless and androgynous pants in natural tones and retro windowpaned checks

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Going wider, wider

From page C1

Jacobs, or snug and flared as Oscar de la Renta and Carolina Herrera.

Younger designers like Derek Lam and Philip Lim, meanwhile, offer still skinny but high-waisted numbers, like a tuxedo-trim trousered.

Light wool, silk hopsack, tweed dominate Ralph Lauren, while Michael Kors' pieces are polished winter khaki and olive drab. Joining the military offerings are jodhpurs from Ralph Lauren. His new pantsuit in grey flannel, cropped jacket and loose pants cropped below the knee are all designed to show off your boots, any dear.

These are called working trousers, because they are equal to men's suits in the corporate world. Yves Saint Laurent created the women's pantsuit and tuxedo suit in the '70s, and this empowered women in the working class.

Ever since Marlene Dietrich wore a man's tuxedo, pants have made women look sexy, androgynous. Katharine Hepburn's slacks, which covered platform shoes and came in flannel linen too, will certainly make anyone look polished, even as the proportions, cut and fabrics remain very feminine.

TOMMY HILFIGER'S denim blue wool jersey is belted, high-waisted and pleated.

MICHAEL KORS' gray worsted wool trousers are also narrow and high-waisted, with hammered-silk pockets and belted in cognac leather.

MICHAEL KORS. Tommy Hilfiger, Oscar de la Renta's brand-new trousers...all high-waisted and tailored in traditional menswear fabrics. Kors' gray flannel set is double-breasted. Cuffed pants are loose on top and tapered to a slim hem. Hilfiger's gray tweed pants have double pleats, roomy side pockets, and are tapered to skim the ankles. De la Renta's corduroy tuxedo pants are very high-waisted and have center beads on the side. It is cuffed and tapered to mid-calf length in black wool taffeta.

MARC JACOBS' tailor—like widely and deep-hued taupe crafted wool trousers, which are floor-length and worn to the shoe.

PROENZA SCHOULER dives his cobweb-shredded heart, slit pants in black and white, textured and woven into high-waisted trousers, then tucked into black leather chukka boots.

T-SUIT TOSHI TANAMOTO—silk wool multi-navy floral pants, floor-length or with over-ankle tucked-in cuffs like a cyclist. Big patch pockets are in front of these trousers.

HYUNDAE TAHT'S wool military pants are low-waisted and have single side pockets, front and side pockets, and narrow to cuffed ankle length.

MICHAEL KORS' high-waisted parachute pants in cocoa silk twill are bonded nylon are shirred and have cuba patch pockets. Best worn with his honey-hued knitwear.

RALPH LAUREN'S classic wool twills, light-brown jodhpurs have side buckle fastening and taper to a cuffed hem just at the ankle to show chestnut leather boots. Big leather belt finishes the look.

Boracay resort's promo packages

BORACAY GARDEN RESORT, A subsidiary of the Boracay Regency Group, offers affordable packages.

For as low as P4,000 per person on triple occupancy from a 3-day, 2-night stay in a Deluxe Room inclusive of daily breakfast and dinner and round-trip land and sea transfers. Get a night free or upgrade to the next room category. Guests may also opt to stay in the Premiere Room for P5,287* per person on triple occupancy. Promo period is until March 31.

Formerly Hotel Seraph, Boracay Garden Resort rests on a two-hectare property at the center of Station 2 White Triple A rating, the resort has 291 well-appointed rooms with charming and elegant interiors. It has deluxe and premiere rooms, as well as premiere rooms with direct access to the pool and family rooms that can fit up to six persons.

Each spacious room has private terrace, Wi-Fi access, bath tub with separate shower area, individually controlled air-conditioning, cable television, direct-dial phone, in-room safe, coffee and tea-making facilities, and personal refrigerator.

Boracay Garden Resort's modern and lifestyle-centered design accommodates two swimming pools, landscaped gardens and all-breeze restaurant and bar. The resort also features private KTV rooms with modern equipment, gym and fitness center and 24-hour friendly personnel and security.

For inquiries on room rates, packages and reservations, call Boracay Garden Resort's Manila Booking Office at 3321111 or e-mail mandarinreservations@boracaygarden.com.ph.

Orchid and garden show ongoing

Ongoing until March 6 is the 66th Annual Orchid and Garden Show at Manila Seedling Bank Riverside Central Center, corner Edsa and Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.

Today at 2 p.m. Andres Bellamo Jr. will talk on Monopodial Orchids. On Feb. 27, 10 a.m., Lourdes Trilogia Manila Observatory will expound on the Causes and Effects of Global Warming while in the afternoon, Willie Ocampo will show how to make a corsage and bouquet for all occasions. On Feb. 28, Vangie Go will give a talk on Trees as the Perfect Companions of Orchids. Symposist Orchids will be discussed by CVL Lee-Lim on March 1 and Northern Gardens will talk about Controlling Pests and Diseases on March 2. Mario Neil B. Mendoza will present Philippine Orchid Species on March 3.

Basic Bonsai-making will be demonstrated by Mody Mangilen on March 4, Plant Nutrition and Urban Vegetable Gardening will be discussed by Alfred Bihasova Corp. on March 5 while Coral Reef Seed Corp. will demonstrate Production of Annual Flowering Plants on March 6, 10 a.m. In the afternoon, Joey Abot will show Basic Orchid Propagation.

Barbara Lindmeier De Lapitan B. Medina will demonstrate the art of Ikebana, both classical and modern, on a way of Tree Living on March 7-8, 2 p.m. Orchid Production and Plant Business Opportunities will be discussed by Fidel Y. Manuel. E-mail philorchidsociety@yahoo.com or visit Jenny at 8365061 or 0917-4484468.

Soap-making seminar

The Golden Treasure Skills Development Program will conduct a one-day seminar on soap-making at the PTC training center 6 and 8, Department of Trade and Industry-Bldg., Roxas Blvd. cor. Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. on Feb. 27, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Participants will learn differentiation of soaps, household and body care products through lectures and hands-on training, for the making of liquid dishwashing soap, liquid hand soap, liquid all-purpose soap, bar detergent soap, powdered soap, dishwashing paste soap, herbal soap and glycerin (transparent bath soap), liquid bleach, fabric softener, tile and bowl cleaner, glass cleaner, carpet shampoo, air freshener, car shampoo, tire black.

Participants will receive certificate of training right after the seminar. For questions call 8726661, 8711571, 8367826, 4331001, log on to www.Golden TreasureSkills.com.

BlackBerrys in place of 'bill shock'

It's a hardworking phone, but young movers also swear by its fun capabilities

By Gisela V. Flood

IT'S NOT URBAN myth, those tales of P150,000 monthly phone bills—for single, personal accounts.

If you have heard accounts of individuals receiving phone billing statements of ludicrous, six-figure amounts, very likely they're true. Chances are, those individuals are smartphone users who enjoyed the convenience and joys of mobile Internet, they had kept their phone Internet service on at all times. Well, at least until their billing statements arrived.

In October last year, Globe Telecom sought to end the so-called "bill shock" by offering flat rate, unlimited use of mobile Internet for all its subscribers using smartphones, or mobile phones with advanced, PC-like capabilities. This month, it reiterates that offer with the launch of the BlackBerry Bold 9700, nicknamed Onyx, the latest from Canada's Research In Motion. Globe is the first service provider to introduce the Onyx here.

"We have a special relationship with BlackBerry so we got the first crack," said Globe Telecom CEO Ernest Cu at the unveiling launch of the Onyx, an improved version of the previous Bold model. It now comes with a trackpad and has longer battery life. "That's why we have also come up with the best deals so our subscribers can get the full functionality of their phones."

Cu is well aware of the horror tales of subscribers in the past who had used their smart phones as they are intended, only to get downright sher shocking their phone bills. For instance, "if you upgraded from Internet Handitext to your iPhone, then it becomes just an Unsch. We don't want that," he said.

The BlackBerry Onyx is being offered free with a new postpaid monthly plan of P1,799. which includes unlimited Internet browsing. Subscribers to this package also receive the Entertainment Plus, a nationwide discount card valued at P150,000, plus additional BlackBerry-exclusive perks from Enjoy partners like The Spa, All Flip Flops (Shoemasa) and The Sam Ever Group of Restaurants (Chelsea, Ms. Asawa, Al Cafe).

New prepaid plan subscribers can get the Onyx as a discounted rate of P30,995, which includes a month-long free unlimited surfing. Existing postpaid plan subscribers who want to own the Onyx are supposed to send of the discounted prepaid bit package, and cancel their account to the unlimited monthly surfing plan of P1,299 (on top of their usual monthly rate: there's a three-month lock-up contract).

THE NEW BLACKBERRY Bold 9700, nicknamed Onyx

Relatively new

"BlackBerry is relatively new here, but our association abroad have been using it for a long time, so I'm kind of naked to see," said Dennis Lee, real-estate broker and young high-achiever. Lee, who's VP for sales and marketing of real-estate giant Global Asiatique, said the switch from another phone make or sometime ago but made her life and work so much easier.

"Now it's easier for our associates abroad to communicate with me because when they send me something [or right], I can check it from my bed, everything's on my phone. I don't have to get up to turn on my computer. All e-mail is 'real time,'" she added. Lee has gone through several BlackBerry models, and so far, she notes the Onyx has exceeded the previous ones. The battery lasts for 2 1/2 days.

A recent convert is Kevin Tan, another real-estate seller and head of the commercial division of his father's company, Megaworld.

"I'm a 'smart' handset and I've always had a hard time maintaining," said Tan, who received his first BlackBerry last year as a Globe Platinum subscriber. "The problem with my old phone was that it hangs and jogs, (meaning), some of the emails/texts won't open."

Constantly monitoring his company's ad placements, being able to view PDF and .ZIP attachments from e-mails is imperative to Tan.

"In our business, we're always mobile so it's very important to be able to communicate right away. Before when I'm abroad, I had to carry a laptop or find a business center. Now everything's in one gadget. It's the best one I've owned. I didn't even need tutorials as it's very user-friendly. I can open most attachments. I get my e-mail in real time."

Fun gadget

While it's a hardworking phone, these young movers also swear by the BlackBerry's fun capabilities. Both Tan and Lee rely on their BlackBerry's camera function. It's also where they check their Facebook.

GLOBE Telecom's BlackBerry reps Ivan Chrisa Lee, Kevin Tan and Aldo Rhys

EVAN Quan of BlackBerry

GLOBE Telecom CEO Ernest Cu with wife Arlene and daughter Cris

GLOBE Telecom vice-president for marketing officer Pascil Ortiz-Luis

HOMEPhils. president Ken Sakai

BlackBerry users have also created exclusive cliques with the BlackBerry Messenger (BBM), where they chat for free. If you haven't heard of this, kids were exchanging "BBM PINs," flaws slowly you're out in the clique; it's exclusive BlackBerry speak.

"I used to have only business contacts in my BBM, now I have a slew of friends, too," Lee said.

The response to the flat rate unlimited surfing promo has been favorable, said Ernest Cu Jr., Globe's vice-head marketing of Ben.

"The (smartphone) market is growing but it's not yet a major segment, primarily because of the cost," Ortiz-Luis stated. "But the current users are the influencers and the CEOs... For the BlackBerry, the younger market has threatened the social networking aspect of it. Now it's not just for business people, it's also for individuals."

Seers give readings, predictions and guidance at the ongoing Psychic Festival

THE FESTIVAL runs until month-end at Eastwood City Walk, Libis, QC.

Have your palms read, your dreams interpreted—all for fun

By Irene C. Perez

THE PSYCHIC FESTIVAL IS ONGOING until Feb. 28 at the Eastwood City grounds, Libis, Quezon City. A pool of "tender-loving seers" gives predictions and guidance on how to make the most of the new year.

Among the divination skills offered are astrology and Palmistry, which of for a view of one's future. Feng shui, meanwhile, gives tips on how to bring in more blessings to your home. Numerology determines, from the cosmic notion of your names, what's in store for you.

Tarot Card Reading is the most popular among the psychic services. It uses cards to get a peek at one's fate, and focuses on love and money luck. Pendulum divination, on the other hand, gives straight yes or no answers to your questions.

The more adventurous ones can try out the aura vibrational or color reflection reading. A psychic holds your hand, closes his eyes and determines the colors surrounding your aura and the energies you radiate. This goes hand-in-hand with Chakra Reading and Scrying/Crystal Ball Reading.

Physiognomy is the study of facial features. Face Life Reasoning pretty much tells what you were in the past through hypnosis. Slide Analysis gives meaning to the moles in your face. And Breath Analysis offers interpretations of your recurring dreams.

Smilimeter Scanning focuses on finding your perfect partner, while Graphology studies your handwriting.

PSQUARE! Sudhesa columnist Cory Quirino tries out tea-leaf divination.

Not too seriously

Each reading can be had for P550 each. Karen Diane Sia-Maria, assistant communications manager for Megaworld, which handles Eastwood City, said a lot of people have been going to the Psychic Festival even though such readings aren't exactly approved by the Catholic Church.

"It's mainly for fun. We don't encourage people to take every reading too seriously. The readers are there to give good predictions, but more of guidance and counseling on how people can better themselves," she said.

The first leg of the festival, from Feb. 5 to 14, was held at The Fiesta, a lifestyle hub also completed by Megaworld. The rest of the festival will be in Eastwood City until Feb. 28. A pool of 18 readers is available every day to 6-9 p.m.

Quick massage services are provided by the Academy of Wholistic Healing Arts Inc. Chants and wellness items are on sale in the Psychic's Nook for any display of spiritual paraphernalia also on exhibit.

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Red is the color of passion and exuding an smoldering as a hot summer day. Pink symbolizes love and affection, like a young summer romance.

Orange is the color of luxury and pleasure, and exudes youth, strength, fearless-ness and exclusivity. Yellow is the color of happiness, as bright as the sun, and is often worn by the sensually adventurous who search for adventure.

Green is the color of harmony and balance—the Zen of summer. It is also the color of hope, renewal and love for the environment. Blue brings memories of the azure sky and the blue sea on a perfect summer day.

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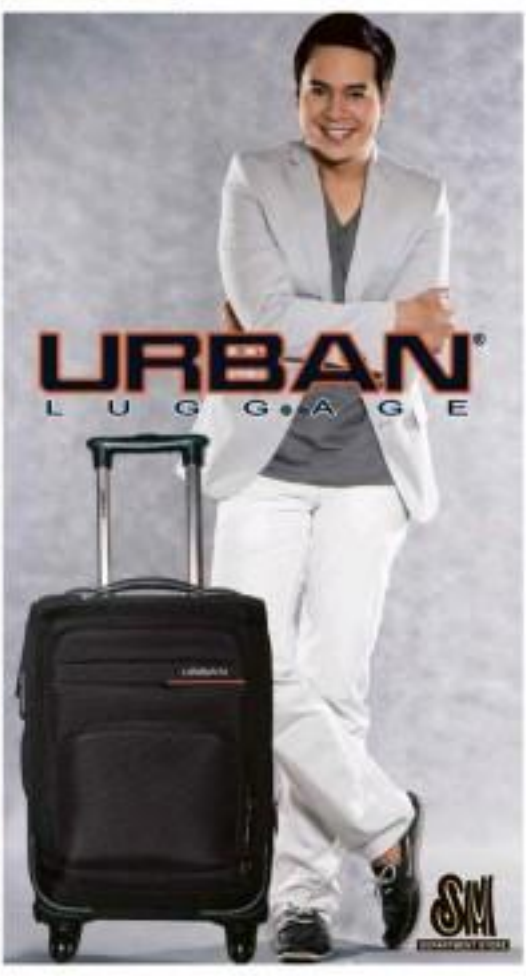
The footwear from the reused materials will be accompanied by a shoe box with a complementing finish of a jeans print.

"The entire process gives new life to these old pairs of jeans," said Janice Ng, Levis Accessories product manager for shoes, bags and headgear. "No pairs are alike and then above makes Levi's a cut above the rest."

LEVI'S Reused technique gives new life to old pair of jeans.



LIFESTYLE *Fashion & Beauty*

What happens when a notebook with 'cult' following and a famous image combine?

Power of two icons

By Cinche V. Meral

BY THE TIME THIS comes out, National Book Store (NBS) would've sold out its stock of the limited-edition Collezione C2 by Rhett Eala Mendiolaa notebooks. At least that's the goal, said the pioneers behind the project shortly before the launch last week.

Their stylization is not unfounded. Collezione C2's famous Philippine map is now a Piaxy design icon recognized worldwide, and its chicks are known to fly off the shelves. Some are known to hoard them. Likely the same formula would work if the map is stamped once notebooks that are themselves iconic?

It seems that was the idea when Armand Cattel, the distributor of Moleskine in Southeast Asia, branched out proposed to Eala four last year in Hong Kong, as about the same time, Miguel Franco, of the Franco clan that owns the National Book Store chain, approached Eala with exactly the same plan. (NBS is Mendiolaa's first partner.)

Frankly if Rhett all had the same idea, they could be sitting on a gold mine, they thought. Besides, said Tin,

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When you choose to shop at The Podium, you choose a world of elite privileges and specialized services. Here, you get the exclusive treatment you deserve. Every time you shop, dine, or spend quality time at The Podium, you can be certain that your comfort and satisfaction is placed above all else.

The moment you step inside The Podium, you are immediately greeted by our courteous mall staff. Discerning guests will truly enjoy shopping for their favorite brands when they are welcomed with service and efficiency.

CONCIERGE SERVICES
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Free parking and valet services are available for our guests' ease and convenience. Our reliable service parker ensures that your vehicles are safe in their hands.

FREE MALL-WIDE WiFi SERVICE
The Podium is also equipped with free mall-wide WiFi services to allow shoppers to connect to the Internet wherever they are.

With personalized services such as these, The Podium guarantees a truly satisfying shopping and dining experience for everyone.

This February, shopping and dining at The Podium is elevated to a new level with these special events:

The Podium Spring Summer Collection Runway Show
Feb 26, 6pm

Ateneo de Manila Glee Club
Feb 27, 4pm

Highest Praise Choral
Feb 28, 4pm

Ann Puno marks her birthday with charity fund-raising bash

GOLDEN GIRL Ann Puno and her husband, lawyer Rene V. Puno

LUIS, Renee and Tiger Puno

GINGGAY Ann Marcad, Pinky Tolosa, Ann R and Noel dela Marcad

ANN'S BIRTHDAY IS A MILESTONE that certainly calls for a major celebration. It marks new beginnings, the unfolding of more welcome episodes in one's life.

One of my resident-gal patronesses, adorable Ann Santos Puno, gathered around 50 of her closest pals and family and 150 others to celebrate

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH
Maurice Arcadio
Photos by Alex Van Stagen using YSL Pivoty Smokers

what she named our "Golden Girl" of the week, dubbings, at the trendy Bellevue Hotel in cool Alabang.

Her husband, witty and smart lawyer Rene V. Puno (managing partner of Puloco, Puno and Puno Law offices and chair of Legarue Insurance Phils. Inc.), together with their multitalented Puno children, Renee, Tiger and Luis, planned the dinner-dance reception on Ann's honor with a totally memorable program for the golden girl.

Hosted by my partner Johnny Litton, the program presented a dance by the Women of Words (WOW), a group of sweet survivors (whom Ann belongs to, Ann herself is a cancer survivor, dubbings) and led by WOW ladies Kits Kung and Mimi Martin. A toast for good health was offered by Ann's sister, Gina X. Abalos, for the honoree whom Gina relentlessly describes as "a woman of extraordinary strength."

A short video included snapshots of Ann's adorable baby figure during her pre-showbiz modeling days. Her children did a song number made popular by Michael Bublé, while husband Rene sang the Filipino classic "Sinomanga." The show-stopper was when Ann, "for the first time in her life," serenaded to wife "Gamba."

Instead of gifts, Ann's friends donated to Ann's favorite charities: Jaya's Living Foundation and St. Gamaredo's Garcia Memorial Hospital in Kalookan, Negros.

To Ann Puno, may you be blessed with at least 50 healthy more years. Cheers!

BLOOMING Tidy Ayuso with her twins, Lyceum's Nicky Lucero, and Marissa Pontan

CHIYO Limcaoco

METRO Society editor Raul Marcaida

BONNIE HOCKS, Ross Honasoy and Christine Brandner

TV and movie star Heart Evangelista with young designer Renee Hemedi

LOLO Tan-Gan, Ambassador Thierry de Ville d'Avray and DTI Asst. Sec. Fe Aponcillo Reyes

JOYSON Ryan Sunseng and Catherine Santos

JENNIFER Augusti and Rich Abraham Eleazar

HA-SAH in silk shoulder-pleated and beaded pilo dress with lace-trimming over long lycra lace skirt with lace and pilo trimming and fishtail

HA-IRENE in lace-beaded pilo cocktail dress over lycra-lined skirt with metal and Jewelcrest pearl accents

STEPHANI Schindewolf and Rene Cornel Pagtakhan

IRIA & Communicator's Philip Randolph and Fashion GH Tanya Quibilan

GOOD-LOOKING winners Bellevue Hotel's Ryan Chan, Glenn Llanes, People Asia's Ryan Carmona and Willson Llanes

RACQUEL Malixy and her husband, Dr. Paul Murray

DIDDY Puno and Charade Lopez

EVA REESAMEL BPI president Gigi Reyes-Banda and Yvonne Jaime

LEAH Jane Ong, Marivic Vazquez, Evelyn Lim and Lolo Tan-Gan, who showcased her pilo-wear collection

CULINARY wins Stephanie Zobel, Gloria Garcia, Chi Liam and Edward and Severino Medina

COLUMNIST Cristina Rojas, lawyer Tess Perez and Nestlé's executive Rhoda Atienza

(SEATED) Richard Tiu, Arce Ice Cream's Ariel Arce, Hyperion Cartonex (standing) Mega Publishing Group president Sari Paz

FLAWLESS Francisco and Flawless endorser Lorna Tolentino with Picture Flawless winners Robert de Claro and Julieanne Arcasas. Flawless president Ruby Ty Carpio and TV comedian Eva Darren

sna was Himmelberg and one Ina creati by Anne-Paul Gauthier. They all inspire a totally new generation of designers.

In the Philippine fashion scene, it's the vibrant and multitalented Lolo Tan-Gan who has been known for her knitwear since 1980, when I gave her the adjective of Queen of Knitwear, redesigner.

True artists always seek growth, dubbings, and so he'll.

Now, Lolo takes pilo to new directions, supporting the fast-disappearing skills in the countryside. For Lolo, "weaving a Filipino trademark is instrumental in rejuvenating one's Filipino identity."

Lolo has found in the young fantastic designer Sidonie Hemedi the perfect collaborator to continue on the vision Lolo has had for over 25 years. Others collaborators were Patty Quilinguen as stylist and Danilo Reyes as visual director, all for Tan-Gan's fabulous pilo-wear collection shown at the NBC Tent, produced by Samsung's Metaverse Icon Series and brilliantly directed by Bobbie Carmona.

Well, dubbings, any woman who wears a Lolo Tan-Gan knitwear doesn't wearing one of the best our country has to offer.

Flawless winners

Flawless, the aesthetic beauty clinic with 52 branches nationwide, underwent massive re-branding to move their clients to the best celebrity abilities, dubbings.

The Picture Flawless campaign unveiled just a few months ago, amidst tears of joy, celebratory hugs and kisses and strained newspaper speeches, Robert de Claro and Julieanne Arcasas were awarded the year-long endorsement contract, billboard and P800,000 in cash each from the popular aesthetic clinic. Following them were Aiko Contreras and Gerlie Cheong in first runner-up positions, and Rafael Xanapdi and Abigael Arasa-Gonzaga runner-up positions.

There were tons of invitees who proudly enjoyed the excellent lunch menu at the popular Bravo Italian Bistro and listened with interest at the short speech.

"All of the Picture Flawless contestants were so flawless," exclaims Ruby Ty, CEO of Flawless. "It was so hard choosing the winners—they all represented the different aspects of the Filipina, from their fearlessness to the inside to their apparent attractiveness physically. Furthermore, they're such wonderful people; they were a joy to have around." When asked if the Flawless Aesthetic Clinic's services and products contributed to the fearlessness of the contestants, Ruby humbly replies, "We were only too happy to help bring out their inner fearlessness." Well said, dubbing.

The best way to say "Congratulations!" THE CHAIN MARTS'

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- Honey Melon P42.00/kg
- Sweet Peas P52.50/kg
- Kinchay P69.90/kg
- Native Lettuce P91.00/kg
- Sampaloc Sigang P26.25/kg
- Okra P26.25/kg
- Ube P22.00/kg
- Native Tomato P15.80/kg
- Camote P18.90/kg
- Carrots Regular/Jumbo P22.20/kg
- Bili Leaves P105.00/pc
- Spinach P23.60/pack
- Green Bell Pepper P66.15/kg

Power of two icons

From page D1

na Mendegare, Starwin' scenario and regional manager of NOS, the running 'was right' as Filipinos' sentiments of nationalism are buoyed by election fever.

Gastel was familiar with Collezione C2's success story, a clothing brand that got a second breath of life owing to the genius of its creative director, who wowed us the country's map on one dress and hasn't stopped doing so since. The Ferrolliman anybody told the idea to the Mobolkins headquarters in Milan. The Philippines is the fastest growing market for Mobolkins in Southeast Asia.

"Filipinos have a strong affection for Collezione C2. It's the same for Mobolkins; its roots are very passionate about it. They have an emotional link with their notebooks. And National Book Store is an institution here, so it's a good match," Castel said.

Mobolkins is the legendary writing pad of some of the world's famous writers, artists and thinkers like Hemingway, Van Gogh, Mozart.

On the collaboration, the Philippine map is silk-screened, silver-white-colored, with the words "My Filipinas" scribbled on the bottom left of the cover. Rizal's famous map shirt line is called My Filipinas 3. It comes in dark blue (P1,400) and pocket size (P990), and is sold in select NBS branches and its website, and at Collezione C2 boutiques. Only a little over 5,000 pieces are available.

Rafa said they had chosen a design that's modernized to appeal to a wide range of users.

Mobolkins has collaborated with other brands, like Comme des Mong Kong, Levi's in South Korea, Filtrer & Stoll in Holland, Phaidon publishing and—so far the most popular—the creators of the Mobolkins typeface.

"We select collaborators that are meaningful," Castel said.

Castel's aggressive marketing seems to underscore his optimism that, despite digital breakthroughs, writing long hand is nowhere near satisfaction.

"When I started the company [Whirling Unit Ltd.] in a third-tier the brand in 2005, everyone was using Palm Pilot...so people must have thought I was crazy," he said. "But I kept buying Mobolkins in France. Now people have moved on from the Palm Pilot to the iPhone but Mobolkins still there. I use both an iPhone, a BlackBerry and a Mobolkins; they have different uses, that's the way it is... Still I take me the Mobolkins for what's important. It's quite surprising."

Mobolkins are designed in Italy and handmade in China, based like books and using acid-free paper. Like Rafa's shirts, it has inspired copies all over the world, but devout fans can tell the difference and stick to the real deal, said Castel.

Priced significantly higher than most notebook brands, could the special-edition Mobolkins, however, attract the same huge market Collezione C2 My Filipinas shirts has?

The team behind it is confident it will. Mobolkins has a niche market, and has avid users and collectors. In fact, NBS will open this year the notebook brand's first shop-in-shop in the country, where the entire Mobolkins collection will be available to its growing cult base.

RARITY Rafa, Collezione C2's creative director; Trina Mendegare, National Book Store's regional manager and NBS Foundation chair; and Jinky Qua, Collezione C2's managing director

ARMAUT Castel, co-owner and general manager of Whirling Unit, distributor of Mobolkins in Southeast Asia

THE SPECIAL. limited-edition My Filipinas Mobolkins, in pocket and desk sizes

NEW styles from Rafa's My Filipinas line for Collezione C2

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LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

Get lucky sa dami ng bargains!

PDI/PDIMAC marketing officer Jhun Hicaldo, marketing manager Joey Alvarez and CEO Lawrence Sison

Cardholders get iPod Nano discount

HSBC'S LATEST CREDIT CARD promo seeks to bring music, technology and style to consumers.

Newly approved HSBC credit cardholders can enjoy 20-percent discount in participating Power Mac Centers on the latest 8GB 5th generation iPod Nano at zero-percent interest for 24 months.

The latest iPod Nano has many cool new features and comes in hip colors—purple, orange, black, silver, blue, green and pink. It has a built-in video camera and can store up to eight hours of video.

It has polished anodized aluminum finish, larger screen, can store up to 2,000 songs, and even has a built-in pedometer, perfect for your workout.

The latest iPod Nano also has the built-in FM radio and Live Photo. You can listen to your favorite radio shows or radio shows with

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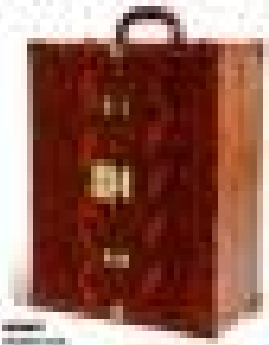
Fashion smorga

Call of the wild



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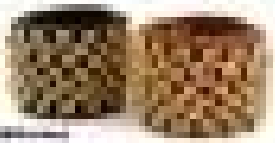
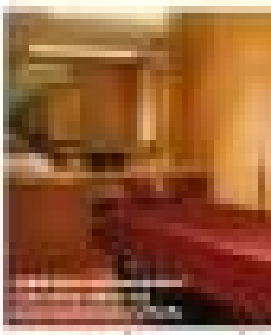


Bag care 101

How to protect that big purchase



Now spa down on ho

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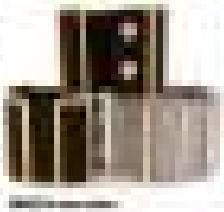
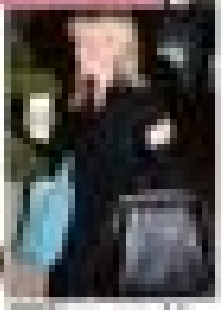
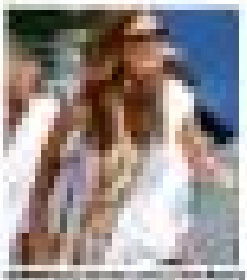
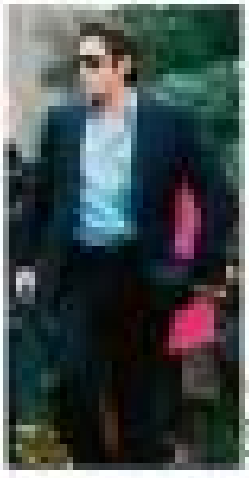
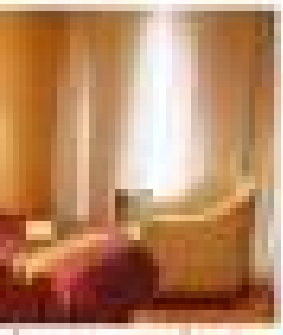






Celebrity fave finds





ding powers of ears

Eye-lifting serum

BEAUTY MUST TRIED THIS WEEK

Olay Regenerist Eye Lifting Serum. Its gentle yet concentrated formula contains Olay's exclusive amino-peptide complex that intensely hydrates to help visibly firm, reduce the appearance of fine lines, brighten the area around the eyes and even its tone. Users report feeling and looking younger-looking eyes within 28 days. Available at all leading supermarkets nationwide

Vanity Basket

Ceramide makeup

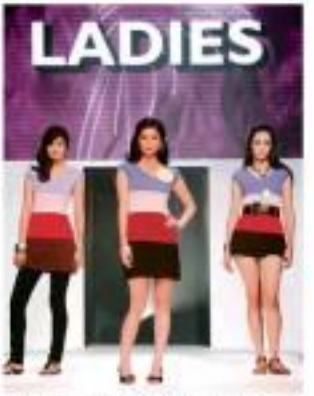
Elizabeth Arden's Ceramide Makeup Collection is a range of Skin Smoothing Concealer, Cream Blush and Plump Perfect Lipstick that will aging beautifully. Exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corporation and available at Rustan's Makati, Shangri-La, Alabang Town Center, Marikina and Greenhills SM Mall of Asia, Robinsons Galleria and Landmark Trinoma.

Love soap

Lush's love soap is fragranced with the cozy notes of the best-selling Sex Bomb. It has jasmine, dairy sage and ylang-ylang that are with known aphrodisiac oils. Exclusively distributed by Bionic Specialists, Inc. to 3D Ghostbits 4, Power Plant Mall, Shangri-La Mall, Greenhills 3, Mall of Asia and Robinsons High Street.

Perfume promo

Rustan Marketing Corporation offers 30 percent discount on every next purchase of selected Lacoste and Hugo Boss fragrances. Kenzo Amour Florale, Escada Desire Me, Lacoste Love of Pink, Hugo XX and 23Y and Givenchy Play Sx Dancer Lx Secret are exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corporation and available in leading department stores.



Direct-selling products on DVD catalogue

Since 1993, Natasha has been providing customers a stress-free shopping alternative through its nationwide direct-selling scheme and its regular mail-order catalogues. Now, this wholly owned Filipino company has issued a first-ever DVD catalogue that allows shoppers to shop right in the comfort of their own home simply by playing the DVD. Natasha fashion pieces, accessories, undergarments, personal and beauty care products and more will be made available through this format, aside from the magazine-catalogues released monthly. With this breakthrough format, customers get to see the clothes as they are worn by Natasha's signature models, including celebrity endorsers Anne Curtis (for ladies' apparel), John Lloyd Cruz (for men's wear) and Mickey Perez (Mark for plus size women). Also featured are Natasha Shape (women's underwear), men's undergarments, the Home Salud Fashion as well as the Teens and Kids Collections. The DVD affords customers a clearer picture of the shape, size and fit of the products. There are shots for dad, dresses for moms, chic corporate apparel for yuppies, hip and trendy pieces for teens, posh clothes and accessories for kids.

The new Natasha DVD Catalogue (January-February 2010) is now available. See the Natasha dealer nearest you.

CHRISTOPHER Rourke, HSBC GVP and head of marketing, and Ron Logan, HSBC head of personal financial services

Cardholders get iPod Nano discount

From page B1

the FM tuner, and it even shows what and when you're listening to. With Live Pause, you can take a quick break from the radio and go back to it with just one click.

Live Pause also allows you to rewind as far back as 75 minutes, then fast-forward to catch the live broadcast.

Cardholders will also be given a "Summer Bash Coupon" entitling them to 15 percent discount on iPod accessories at Power Mac Center.

HSBC credit cardholders can also enjoy zero-percent installment in over 1,000 stores under the HSBC installment Plan promo and five-percent rebate plus rewards with the HSBC credit card on fuel and non-fuel purchases at Caltex.

With HSBC's Home&Away Privilege Programme, cardholders can enjoy a wide range of exclusive benefits when traveling, with savings on shopping, dining, leisure and entertainment.

HSBC's iPod Nano promo is valid until May 1. Redemption period ends Sept 30.

EDI ROBERTO, HSBC consumer assets marketing acquisitions VP; Anya Ratigbak-Cajucom, consumer assets marketing OIC, and Angelica Martinez, consumer assets marketing officer

LIFESTYLE Fashion&Beauty

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BLACK sweater-dress top by Cotton Alley, stretch jeans by Artisan Exchange

Vanna Calalang Severino makes her mark in classy casuals

Rider/restaurateur/mom has that winding-down style

VANNA CALALANG SEVERINO'S LATEST ... and later another venture, Elias Pizzeria and Tapas Bar in Malate and Rockwell.

...restaurant, The Last Outkirt, at Manila Polo Club, is casual and welcoming enough for people to come in sports gear, yet classy enough for people in corporate attire to feel comfortable in.

What brings this classy yet cozy ambiance? It must be the series of huge black-and-white photographs of polo horses in action, or the wooden name plates of winners hanging prominently on the walls. These give you an overall feeling of being among the elite, because, after all, polo, originally a training game for cavalry units casually the king's guards), became a sport for the nobility.

In 2006, Vanna began helping out in her family's restaurant, Mongolian Grill. Her interest in the food industry developed, as she decided to take up Hotel and Restaurant Administration at UP Diliman. With a bachelor of science diploma in HRA, she underwent Chef Training at the California Culinary Academy in San Francisco, California.

She also took cake decorating and food styling courses in LA. Her skills went also honed when she apprenticed at Pinto de Lys under Chef Hubert Rolles.

When she came back to the Philippines, she ran her own businesses.

THE WORKING CLASS

Rina Mayen-Go, Contributor

Vanna likes simple, uncomplicated cuisines, leaning toward Italian cuisines, because Dave were the dishes her father Conrad taught her every time he came back from his trips to Italy. It also helps that her sister lives in Umbria, Italy, where she has access to fresh herbs and spices.

As a brilliant touch, and to add authenticity, Vanna offers several Dave's pieces on her menu, one of the most popular dishes to her restaurant.

MORE F2

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SNAKE PRINT dress and ruffle top, Armani Exchange

HALTER tank dress by Anne Klein

ASYMMETRIC graphic-print top and slim fit jeans by Armani Exchange

Rider/restaurateur/mom . . .

Front page F1

now 28 years. She also has a good team, quick to pick up on her new ideas.

Mezza is, however, more than a chef and restaurateur. She is also a skilled rider, who has been riding since she was 18. Her convictions that she has entrusted's location allows her to ride every day, in between lunch and dinner service. Mezza has won the "Dressage Rider of the Year" and "Riding School Rider of the Year," with her horse, Bellini.

She's a typical mother, who's kept busy by her two kids—their school requirements, as well as their ballet, swimming and soccer lessons. Because her kids' activities revolve around the club, Mezza gets to spend a lot of time with them.

Moving from the restaurant to the stables and around the club, she is really most comfortable in jeans. The sweatless dinner top dresses up the casual bottom. Bold, black and white graphics convey an updated sense of style. The simple dumdi shows her femininity. The loose, flowing gown gives her comfort and formality.

Mezza is lucky that she's able to combine her two loves—cooking and riding—and enjoy them with friends.

Her success has come from hard work and dedication and, at the end of a tiring day, the Last Chukker is the perfect place to be.

(Chukker refers to one of the periods of play in a polo match. The last chukker is the last step where players get to unind down and drink, eat, relax.)

How to prevent wrinkles

TIME IS EVERY WOMAN'S enemy and its most famous harbingers is the wrinkle. No one looks forward to getting wrinkles, but the sad truth is that it's inevitable as we age. Thankfully, one can never be too young to start preventive measures. For those with the diligence, here are some tips for preventing wrinkles.

Isabel Rivera, Backstage Pics

Step 1

The sun is one of the major causes of wrinkling, so protect your skin from it. Wear a broad-spectrum sunscreen with a high SPF rating every day. Apply it about 30 minutes before you leave the house, and reapply every four hours. If you are sweating, or are in water, apply more often. Wear a hat if you are spending extensive time in the sun. You should also wear sunglasses, which protect against both UVA and UVB rays.

Step 2

Hydrate. It's imperative that you keep your skin hydrated from the inside out. Aim to consume at least 64 oz of water daily; that's eight glasses a day. When you drink enough water, your skin will remain moist and supple.

Step 3

Moisturize. Dehydration and loss of elasticity leads to wrinkles. To keep your skin constituted on the outside, apply a moisturizer that is appropriate for your skin type, daily. Moisturizers that contain sunscreen make it a two-for-one deal.

CLINIQUE Dramatically Different moisturizing lotion, P1,400; Kiehl's Damage-Repair Moisturizer, P1,500; Shu Uemura Radiance cream, P1,000; Estee Lauder Time Zone, P1,100; Bum's Bees Naturally Ageless Line Diminishing Day Lotion, P1,950; Pond's Age Miracle Daily Resurfacing cream, P695. Products are available at Rustan's, Beauty Bar, Shu Uemura in Rockwell, Kiehl's in Greenbelt 5 and all leading department stores.

GIRLIE Bandoy

Step 4

Apply hydroxy acids to your skin. Alpha, beta and polyhydroxy acids come from fruit, milk and sugar cane. These acids work to remove old, dead skin cells and help produce newer, younger-looking cells. They also encourage collagen production, which plumps up skin, thereby reducing the appearance of wrinkles and fine lines. Your skin may initially be sensitive to hydroxy acids, so test them on a small patch before full application.

Step 5

Botox and awkward pout-inducing smiles cause wrinkles. If you need to wrinkle your forehead, crease your brow or squint your eyes for extended periods of time, these facial movements hold wrinkles in more than. Wrinkles are caused by repeated facial movements so try to relax your face throughout the day.

Step 6

Do not smoke. Smoking cigarettes has been shown to lead to premature wrinkling.

Step 7

Eat healthy a well-balanced diet is a key component to healthy, young-looking skin. Aim to consume a diet that is rich in vitamins and minerals, particularly Vitamins A, C, E and K, which have been shown to promote radiant skin.

MENCHU Romero

Step 8

Aside from these steps, there women think a few more tips to smoothen wrinkles out.

"I started using Tit Mickler from Good Skin Labs. It's a deep wrinkle filler that erases frown lines, forehead lines and under-eye lines. I use it on a base then applying my moisturizer and makeup. It works better than any wrinkle cream."—Menchu Romero, *MAP* panel district chair

"For the face, I use Clinique advanced protection sun care, sun wrinkle protection SPF 30."—Adelle Roxas, jewelry designer/ model

All Groomed Up At Pet Express

Headsale, a 7-month old shih tzu, before getting groomed at Pet Express in SM Cubao

Keeping your pet well groomed is not only a great way to keep him cute and clean, but also helps you detect any health problems that would otherwise not be noticed. And when it comes to grooming, it is best to leave it to the experts at Pet Express, the one-stop pet shop for haircuts, nail trimming, ear cleaning and more.

Located at the Ground Floor of SM Cubao, Pet Express, the Dog and Cat Shop, has various grooming packages and spa care services to suit your beloved pet's needs. Experts trained pet groomers will have nothing but tender loving care as they give your pet a bath, hair cut with blow dry, trim their nails, clean their ears, brush their teeth, and more.

Here, Pet Express shares some tips on how you can make your furry friend look and feel their best.

* Make it a point to brush the coat of your pet as often as possible to prevent hair build up and excess shedding. More than making your pet feel good, you'll bond with you beloved pet as you brush his hair.

* Pets generally consider nail trimming as an unpleasant experience, as they do not like their paws handled. You'll have an easier time if you get them used to touching their paws when you groom or pet them.

* Regularly check your pet's ears since this is a prime breeding spot for bacteria and yeast. Their ears should have a healthy pink glow, and if not, have your pet examined by a veterinarian as these may indicate some poor health symptoms.

Pet Express is located at the Ground Floor of SM Cubao. To reserve a time slot, watch out for the opening of two Pet Express stores in the summer of 2010.

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The Perfect Coat mild, soothing shampoo and conditioner is specially formulated for your cat's delicate skin and coat

Nature's Variety Instinct Raw Boost Grain Free Turkey Formula is packed with real meat, fruits and vegetables, and is free of grains, potatoes and artificial preservatives

This Nature's Variety pet food contains natural probiotics, omega fatty acids and nutrients for healthy skin and coat

All natural dietary supplement for your dog's healthy skin and shiny coat

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All groomed up

UNILEVER Skin marketing manager Paul Kadinkang, Pond's senior brand manager Jacqui Youngkan, Unilever PR and external manager Nikki Abello, Pond's assistant brand manager John Galloyan, Pond's assistant brand manager Jonathan Pua

GANTI Pinomoli and Michelle Pantoja

UNILEVER R&D Center Shanghai product development senior manager for Skin Kevin Chang

Two new serums for advanced skincare

POND'S INTRODUCES ITS latest skincare technology with Pond's Age Miracle Concentrated Resurfacing Serum and Pond's Flawless White Spots Blocking Serum, both created to fight the signs of aging and to help the skin regain its natural and youthful glow.

At the recent launch of the products, guests were treated to a test showing how the serums are produced. Other Pond's products were also on display along with the skin analyzer, which allowed guests the chance to have their skin tested and provide recommendations for improvement.

Unilever R&D Shanghai's Skin Product Development Manager Skin Division Dr Kevin Chang took care of talking about the two new Pond's products.

Concentrated with 20 times more active ingredients than its cream-based product, Pond's Age Miracle Concentrated Resurfacing Serum contains advanced 11AM complex—one of the best anti-aging ingredients available in the market. This powerful ingredient makes skin feel rightened and uplifted, as well as diminishes skin sagging.

The Pond's Flawless White Spots Blocking Serum, meanwhile, is designed to help fight skin darkening and spot-inducing agents, with its VALIO complex and Glucoside C.

POND'S Age Miracle line

The event also hosted three couples—Pedo Trillo and Rissa Mamangun, Ganti Pinomoli and Michelle Pantoja, and Jinggoy and Meryn Lara-Ejercito—who talked about how Pond's played a role in their love stories.

COUPLE Ganti Pinomoli and Michelle Pantoja try out the skin analyzer

JINGGOY and Meryn Lara-Ejercito

PADGU Trillo and Rissa Mamangun

HOST Jaya Hood

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Drugstore brands that deliver

BACK IN THE DAY, THE ONLY ACCEPTable drugstore beauty purchases were basics like bath and body products and some makeup colors. Drugstore skincare was acceptable only for those in their teens and 20s. Well, that no longer holds true, as the latest skincare finds will prove that we, drugstore finds, don't have to hold a candle to their department store sisters.

Pond's Age Miracle Concentrated Resurfacing Serum targets women 35 years old onwards. It contains GLA3 complex which works on skin's core to help counteract the skin always looks dewy, smooth, firm and uplifted.

Asian women's skin betrays their age by sagging and showing discoloration even before lines show up, said Pond's Age Miracle line tackles these specific problems.

Former beauty queen and actress and now Unilever Global brand director Meryn Lara credits Age Miracle's serum for keeping her skin smooth, poreless and problem-free as her current 34 month of pregnancy.

A user of the Age Miracle cleanser and day-and-night cream, Lara said she had noticed at the early stage of pregnancy that hormone imbalance made her usually smooth skin darken rough and dull with minor breakouts starting. She then added that she used the skin regimen (after the cleanser and before the day-and-night cream) and before the week was over, her skin was clearing up.

Although doubted only by pregnant women, the Pond's research and development group still stresses that it is important to consult your doctor before using this or any skincare product.

Some Age Miracle Line women users believed:

Cheap anti-age products

Women in their 30s and over often choose to skip recommending anti-aging department store products that cost an arm and a leg.

Well, I finally found Nivea's Diligo line, which can be used on the face as early as your 30s if you already show signs of premature aging.

My favorite of the line is the Cell Renewal Anti Age Body Care Lotion, which has UV filters and is designed to be applied to the neck, décolletage and arms.

A lot of women look younger than they are from the chin up, but their neck, arms and décolletage show lines, age spots and a rough texture that betray years of exposure and sun abuse. I say go the extra mile and apply on your hands and chest area at night.

The DNAge line's top ingredients are Ferlic Acid and Creatinine to increase skin cell renewal, recovery and vitality.

The Age Hand cream, called anti-age Hand Care with SPF 15, is beneficial to all ages and prevents premature aging and wrinkling of dry, quickly washed and exposed hands. I apply this during the day every time I wash my hands and use the body cream at night.

The Face Creams for Day with SPF Night and Eye Area, and the Zone Action Face Contour Serum...are too rich for those under 30, but ideal for women above 30 as it is designed to protect skin's DNA from external damage and replace enzymes that mature skin can no longer produce.

Note: The SPF 15 on the day cream is only meant for incidental sun exposure meaning for women who spend most time indoors. For those who love to sunbathe, 20-25 years old, who already have premature signs of aging.

Signs of aging

The first sign of aging is dull yellow tinged skin that becomes somewhat rough. Women with these skin concerns may spot fine lines and dullness as early as twenty five due to the lack of protective barrier to the sun and other aggressors.

AGE20 soap is a vanilla-scented bar that has collagen and elastin combined with the whitening properties of Kojic acid to remove freckles, help skin regenerate, which cleanses and exfoliates deeply.

The Dream White Face Cream, which is used day and night on the face and neck, is a non-greasy but moisturizing formula, which contains Ginseng and avocado extracts as well as Kojic acid, elastin and retinol to expel wrinkles, help skin regenerate, remove suppleness.

Those with oily skin may use the lotion for extra whitening and to keep shine at bay.

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Gray elastic belt

Black resin bangle with gold bangles

The shift dress

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Spot-on Style

NY Square showcases versatile style staples for the busy cosmopolitan Filipina looking for chic, affordable yet trendy wear that can be worn from day to night. Fashion to invest on now!

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White blouse

Blue satin pleated top with black lace trimming

Silver silk cowl neck top

Cuffed pants

Gray double-waisted pleated trousers

Black satin trousers

Basic sleeveless blouse goes well with gray-cuffed pants. Change into a shimmering satin top for casual evening escape. Be sure to cap the look with your favorite heeled-stilletos.

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Silver embellished silk halter top

Gray cotton pleated tulip skirt

Multicolored resin bangles

The pencil skirt

Black pleated pencil skirt

Your basic black pencil skirt can be paired with an elegant embellished top for those corporate meetings, then you can change into a colored satin top for a fun's night-out after work.

Black elastic zipper belt

ENTERTAINMENT

Edite Evonne G. Velarde

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Rihanna talks about troubled childhood

INTERNATIONAL superstar Rihanna talks about her latest album "Rated R," her past relationship with Chris Brown, troubles in her childhood and her first career-smashing meeting with Jay-Z on the latest edition of CNN's "Talk Asia." It airs Feb. 27, 8 p.m.; Feb. 28, 4:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.; and March 1, 7:30 a.m.

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FINOY DESIGNER AT THE OSCARS

Oliver Tolentino, center, who describes himself as "commoner from Divisoria," is a finalist in the Oscars Designer Challenge 2010. Only in Hollywood, Page G4.

Heber is a liar, says Filscap head

By Pocholo Concepcion

"HE'S A LIAR." SONGWRITER-singer-actor and former musician Ronnie Ties, his voice rising to a crescendo Wednesday night at the office of the Filipino Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers Inc. (Filscap) in Quezon City, Ties refuted all allegations made by Heber Bartolome, a Filscap member and former officer.

"We started this, we'll finish it!" declared Ties, chair of the board of trustees. He was referring to the complaint that Bartolome filed with the National Bureau of Investigation on Tuesday, in which the latter claimed anomalies in Filscap's financial dealings, particularly disbursements totaling P9.5 million.

Filscap is a nonstock, nonprofit agency that collects royalties for its members whose songs are used on TV, radio, in the movies, concert halls, hotels, clubs, restaurants, KTV bars, malls, retail stores and other establishments.

Fists have been twisted, Ties said, adding that the agency had suspended Bartolome last month for "double-dealing, songs (in another royalty collector) without Filscap's knowledge."

The facts, according to Ties:

• 1987: Bartolome signs up as Filscap member, authorizing it to be his music publishing agent.

• 2004: Galaxy Records releases an album produced by Pupulots of Tropical Depression, which contains a cover of Bartolome's "Ayako Sa Kay Sta. Clara."

• 2007: Bartolome signs another music publishing deal, this one with EMI, receiving P2 million in advance royalties for all his songs.

• 2008: Bartolome asks Filscap to sue after Galaxy for not getting permission to use one of his songs. Filscap sues Galaxy for P800,000.

• 2009: Galaxy files a P5.5M countersuit, alleging that it had paid EMI P20,000 for the right to Bartolome's song, and that Bartolome had received the money.

Filscap, apparently unaware of the double deal, called a board meeting late last year. Ties recalled, "I told Heber that Filscap stand to lose P5 million because of him."

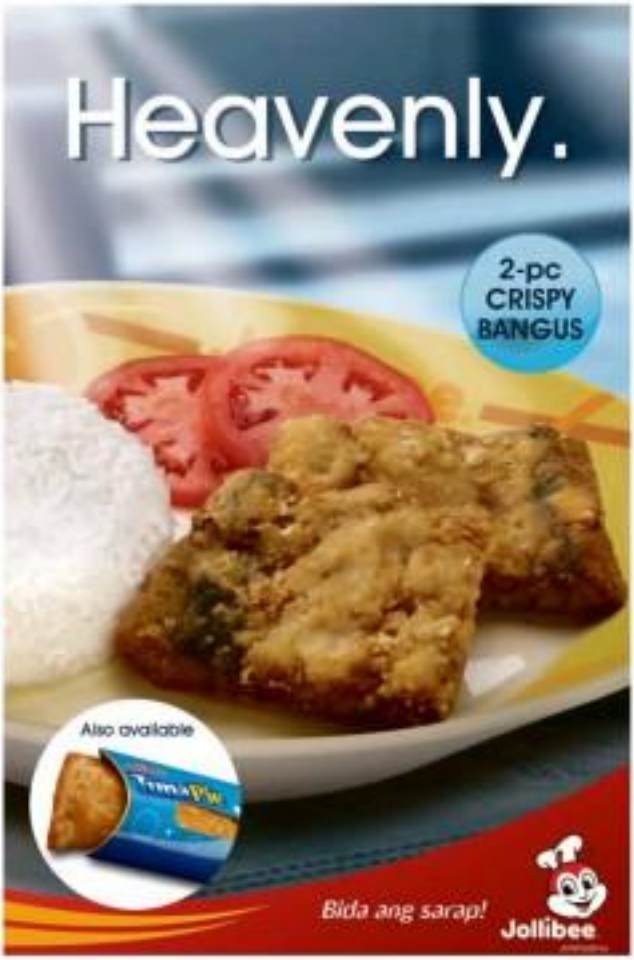
Ties said Bartolome claimed he couldn't remember details of the contract he signed with EMI.

Voting unanimously last Jan. 26, Filscap suspended Bartolome for one year. That was when he began acting up, Ties said.

Bartolome reportedly gathered several composers to his house shortly after, on the pretext of setting up a songwriters' guild. "Those persons signed an attendance sheet, which Heber [illegible]

TIT FOR TAT

Inch per inch, Bangs Garcia (left) is expected to match Rosanna Guinoo, what's looming out of the scene. Bangs is raising Rosanna's physique a choice project. Story on page A24.



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2 SHERLOCK HOLMES
3 MICHAEL JACKSON & OLYMPIANS: THE LEGENDARY TOUR

DUMAGUETE

1 CIRQUE DU FREAK: VAMPIRE'S ASSISTANT
2 MICHAEL JACKSON & OLYMPIANS: THE LEGENDARY TOUR
3 MISS YOU LIKE CRAZY

BACOLOD

1 ARMORED
2 MISS YOU LIKE CRAZY
3 LOVE HAPPENS
4 MICHAEL JACKSON & OLYMPIANS: THE LEGENDARY TOUR
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6 THE MESSENGER: THE SCARLET ROSE

ILOILO

1 ARMORED
2 MISS YOU LIKE CRAZY
3 THE ISLAND SIDE
4 MICHAEL JACKSON & OLYMPIANS: THE LEGENDARY TOUR
5 LOVE HAPPENS
6 VALENTINE'S DAY

DANSAN

1 MISS YOU LIKE CRAZY
2 THE MAGNIFICENT DR. PARNASSUS
3 VALENTINE'S DAY
4 THE WOLFMAN

ILOCOS NORTE

1 THE MESSENGER: THE SCARLET ROSE
2 THE ISLAND SIDE
3 MISS YOU LIKE CRAZY

German film scholar conducts Manila workshop

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos courtesy of Ingo Petzke, IFC

"WE ARE IN THE MIDST OF A cinematic revolution," said Peter Zimmermann, author, film scholar and lecturer at the University of Duisgerstad in Germany.

Zimmermann, who visited Manila to conduct a workshop on documentary filmmaking, noted that a "Cinemaworks revolution" further invigorated the use of "socially committed documentaries" all over the world.

From Berlin to Beijing, from Stockholm to Manila, the documentary has become a potent tool to address and register social issues, said Zimmermann.

The Philippine Independent Filmmakers Cooperative (IFC) teamed up with the Goethe Institut Manila, the College of Saint Benilde and the National Commission for Culture and the Arts to mount a week-long documentary workshop (which ends today) entitled "Developing the New Filipino Documentary."

IFC chair Ellen Ongkiko-Medil said the workshop's aim was to "train a new corps of filmmakers to look at reality with fresh eyes."

Apart from Zimmermann, three other experts—Nonoy Dayrit, Gabriela Yuse and Christoph Hellmer—are tasked with 12 young Filipino filmmakers.

During the workshop, Zimmermann led a "pitching forum" on which the participants presented their documentary "self" (their proposed theme for respective projects). (The theses will hopefully be finished and screened by the end of the year.)

Zimmermann noted the participants tackled "diverse" topics—from corruption in the educational system to drug-related problems in Mindanao, from historical to environmental concerns—in their theses.

Zimmermann noted the mixed reaction between traditions and modernity. "It's a reality in new developing countries, young independent filmmakers want to narrate what's going on. But do we shouldn't just discuss problems; it should show the people's hopes and dreams as well."

While in Manila, Zimmermann sought some of the Filipino films presented in the Cinema Rehiyon festival.

"I was impressed," he said. "It's important to support these filmmakers."

Heber is a liar

Previous page G1

smacked to a mudslinger that became the basis for the MR complaint," said Tan.

The panel cut that the release was present during meetings where the heads of trustees discussed the "questionable disbursements of P8.3 million" to Senator Pilipino Incoming manager Jose Suaco.

Suaco had allegedly been striking rumbly pressure from Pilipino in behalf of Senator Manny Pelaez, which controls the rights to a number of songs, including "Pudsay." Problem was, Tan said, another person claimed he fellow own the real composer, so that all royalty payments to "Erasha" had been placed on hold.

Pilipino also filed a case against Suaco's Music Publishing and, in press time, Tan was sure, "We will win Heber."

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Young mom early 'AI' favorite

CRYSTAL Bowersox

LOS ANGELES—ELLEN DeGeneres is proving a hit with "American Idol" fans as a new judge, although Paula Abdul is very much missed, according to an AOL Television poll to...

...the public get their first chance this week to vote for performers on the top-rated TV talent contest, guitar-playing Andrew Garcia and young mom Crystal Bowersox are encouraging an early fan...

...Garcia, 24, of California, and Bowersox, 24, who plays guitar and mouth organ, won a beating 26.2 and 25.2 percent of votes in the AOL Television poll over the weekend.

Michael "Big Mike" Lynche, whose wife had their first baby while he was competing, was third in...

...Lynche was also voted the most overhyped, an honor decided by an overwhelming 70.3 percent that highlighting personal stories such as his gave contestants an unfair advantage.

Some 58 percent of those polled said DeGeneres was doing an "excellent" job in her new role, with just 7.1 percent judging her "awful." But plenty of "Idol" fans are missing Abdul, who quit last summer in a dispute over her contract renewal.

a comedy film about love, divorce and everything in between

NOW SHOWING

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OPENS MARCH 3

Pinoy designer is Oscar bet

BEVERLY HILLS—"I'M STILL awestruck. I feel like I'm in a dream," Oliver Tolentino admitted after he and eight other designers were about to be introduced to the fashion and entertainment press as the finalists in the "Oscars Designer Challenge 2010."

The Filipino designer said, "I, a province boy who grew up in Isla Gozo, Staten, am at the Academy headquarters before the international press for the presentation my gown that might be worn on the stage of the Oscars? Someone should pinch me!" Oliver stood beside his gown entry, draped on a hanger, which is an ivory white Gypsagile fabric and shows floor-length gown with bedroom panel detail.

FILIPINO fashion designer Oliver Tolentino is interviewed by Oscar fashion coordinator Patty Fox at the Academy headquarters in Beverly Hills. His...

Exquisite creation

Sequences and photographers salivated Oliver's exquisite creation. He heard Oliver extol the beauty and quality of our pifia and abaca fibers to every journalist who interviewed him. TV star Carmen Gonzalez couldn't help but admire the black abaca blazer that Oliver wore this ever occasion). "I want one!" said Carmen.

The Oliver Tolentino also showed off their entries: Fernando Carnalea, Phong Hong, Oliver Shahar and Art Sharabendiani of Los Angeles; Hala De La Rosa, Chicago; Sidny Zindin and Ivy Higa, New York; and Ricardo Gallol, Phoenix. A quick online check of their websites showed that they are very impressive professional credentials. The winning gown, to be determined by online voting, will be worn by one of the awards society emcees at the Academy Awards on March 7, while its designer and his guest will get to attend the prestigious event.

The Academy building's lobby was transformed into a red carpet runway for the morning event. Patty Fox, the Oscars' fashion coordinator, introduced the finalists one by one. The...

...time, Oliver's entry seemed to...

...Tolentino, who also wore teal bling by Shaniko Kaza...an Korea bracelets and tiered drop earrings, dripping in diamonds. The jewelry pieces were by all the models worn on display before the runway event for they were under the watchful eye of security guards.

Later, Oliver shared with us his thoughts on the event. First, he explained how he came up with the gown. "The Oscar night is all about drama and I wanted to create a dramatic gown," he said. "It also usually takes a long time and a lot of effort for someone to reach the level of receiving an Oscar. I wanted a dress that requires a lot of time and effort. I think when someone sees my gown, they will realize and appreciate how much hard work and creativity went into it."

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD
Robert V. Ascroft

The designer who splits his time between LA and Manila summed his first evening with fellow finalists "We met for the first time in a studio in downtown LA last Sunday. Before I realized it, all the dinner were hanging in a row as it was a little intimidating. But the designers were very friendly and I instantly made friends and want to keep in touch. It was a real interesting group with designers from various cultural backgrounds."

Of the model the Academy picked to wear her gown, Oliver gushed, "I loved Tabitha as soon as she walked in the room. She had the dramatic walk that I wanted and feel an Oscar gown should have. I hope she's good luck because when she wins an Oscar for the first time, the whole

MODEL Tabitha wears Oliver's creation for the year's challenge.

world will be watching."

To vote, go to Oscar.com, the official website of the Academy Awards, where you can see images of the gowns. Anyone over 18 can register once a day through 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time (3:59 on March 1, when the voting period ends.

E-mail the columnist at rvergara_1505@yahoo.com

Call for support

Oliver is appealing to his kababayans and friends around the world to vote for him.

"There's a part of me who wants people to vote for my gown but only if they really think it is the most deserving to appear on the Oscar stage," he said. "There's another part of me who is dying to see pifia being worn across the Oscar stage for the first time, no matter what! I have to admit how many people were selfless, but I do hope that people will be motivated to take the time to vote. There's one vote per day for every registered e-mail address and people really like my gown, I hope they will vote until March 3!"

To vote, go to Oscar.com, the official website of the Academy Awards, where you can see images of the gowns. Anyone over 18 can register once a day through 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time (3:59 on March 1, when the voting period ends.

E-mail the columnist at rvergara_1505@yahoo.com

Happy for Roxanne

By Marinel R. Cruz

"ONE PERSON'S LOSS IS SOmeone else's gain," said Paulo Lorenzo, 22, who replaced Hermann Caldoza, 24, as lead actor...

...time on the Filipino Metro drama series "Magkano ang Iyong Dangal" on ABS-CBN.

The afternoon drama, originally intended for a 13-week run, has been extended to 26 weeks. "I guess everything was meant to happen," Paulo said. Interviewed on Monday, "I'm glad it's doing so well."

The actress added: "I heard from friends that Roxanne is getting married. I feel happy for her, but at the same time sympathetic. She can still go back to show biz after getting married, hopefully with understanding husband."

Roxanne and Paulo first worked together in the 2006 action-drama show "Nikas." They reportedly had a rift when Paulo admitted she was picking out with Hermann's ex-husband, John Estrella, 22, who played the role.

Paulo said refusing to play the character of Carmela Masters in "Magkano ang Iyong Dangal" had been tough. "I get used to a role that's glamorous, funny and with a strong personality. In the beginning, it was hard shifting to being the shy and soft-spoken Carmela."

Paulo said she and Carmela are really very much alike. "In real life, I'm very simple. I'm also modest. You can bring me anywhere and I'll fit right in," she said.

MICHAEL Douglas (L) and Oliver Stone

Gecko's return

"WALL STREET" DIRECTOR OLIVER Stone takes the helm for "Wall Street 2: Money Never Sleeps, said talks about Gordon Gekko (Michael Douglas) redux:

What's in store for Gekko?

He comes out of prison at the start of the movie, looking for that second chance.

How will this film in...

Because wouldn't he [realize]

Many young people have come up to me and said, "I went to Wall Street because of that movie." I think the movie was misunderstood by some because it was about a bad like thing...how people will worship money in all sorts.

Why a sequel only now?

I resisted it for many years. I didn't want to glorify greedy people to begin with.

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Precious Finds from Fashion 21

LIVING Stars
Editor Bronie G. Velarde

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Oscar winner still feels insecure, anxious about work

FASHION Cotillard on the Iranian actress Golshifteh Farahani in LA

OSCAR-WINNING MARION Cotillard is on a winning streak in Hollywood, one of few French stars to make it in Tinseltown, but still talks of "insecurity" and "anxiety" on the job.

She told AFP in Paris, "When you're working, you're simply someone who's working ... with passion and sometimes with anxiety."

A sentimental pixie since scooping an Oscar as tragic Edith Piaf in biopic "La Vie En Rose," the 34-year-old is making headlines at home this week ahead of the released France of "Nine," a star-studded musical.

Cotillard followed in Lorod Kerrupo in 2008 when she became only the second woman to win the Best Actress Oscar for a non-English speaking performance.

In a bubble

"I know from experience that when you're working you can be very egocentric. When I'm working, on a character I'm in a bubble," she said. "Films I was on the Pad never, I think it was difficult for the people who were around me at the time."

Brought up in a Gaullist family—her father is a director, actor and former mime, her mother an actress and drama teacher—Cotillard piloted up a catalog of awards in France before

(AFP) RG

BOOKS

BOOTS ANSON-ROA

I WAS in a library in Washington DC, when I saw the book "Jesus, CEO: The Leadership Secrets of Jesus" by Mike Murdock. I usually go for instructional and psychology-based books. But I found that this book is interesting. It looks at transformation in Jesus Christ could be done in November, even for business gurus aren't that there's nothing the matter with managing from the heart, or based on one's convictions.

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OVERHEARD

ACTOR Mickey Rourke, who has no problems, says he still doesn't understand why the IRS pursued him. "I'm not a politician, I'm not owing the world, I haven't created a case for cancer, I make movies ... All is well. We're very positive, very confident that things will work out to our benefit and to our favor." —AP

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LINDSAY Lohan (right), and Samantha Ronson

Lohan hopes to rekindle lesbian affair

LONDON—ACTRESS LINDSAY LOHAN described her lesbian relationship with DJ Samantha Ronson as "really scary" but said in an interview published on Tuesday that she still hopes to reconcile with Ronson.

In a rare account of the vicious 18-month relationship for the "Mean Girls" star with Britain's The Sun newspaper that Ronson, 33, was the only woman she had ever been attracted to.

"It was a big deal for me because I've never had a relationship in public so that's especially being with a girl for the first time ... but I didn't care because I fell in love," Lohan, 23, said in the interview to London.

"We love each other. We might reconcile, maybe. I don't know," Lohan said.

The pair split in April 2009 after a tempestuous few months in which Lohan was seen in tears after nights out with Ronson.

Paparazzi factor

Lohan said they broke up because Ronson's family and friends did not approve of her and the paparazzi her life attracts, but that they live in the same apartment building in Los Angeles and were still in touch.

Lohan has a police file on her in relation to cocaine, ecstasy and other prescription drugs, saying she first took heroin in 2007.

"I abused substances and it wasn't the answer to my problems," The Sun reported.

Lohan said she was re-booked for a breath test after she checked into rehab for the first time. She later went back to rehab twice and was sent to jail briefly in 2007 for recent possession and drunk driving.

Lohan, who is still on probation, told The Sun that she was now clean. But she added, "I'm allowed to drink now but I know my limits. There are occasions where I have a few glasses. There's no reason to [drink] because I don't want to feel like sh*t in the morning." —Reuters

Oscar winner ...

CUTTHLARD in "Mon"

Frenchspeak

breaking onto the international scene in 2003 with modern Jane Eyre "Jeg Elsker Dig."

Since the Paul movie, she has starred in "Public Enemies" with Johnny Depp, "Time"...where she plays Daniel Day-Lewis' wife...and is now scheduled for a role alongside Leonardo Di Caprio in a new film by Christopher Nolan, "Inception."

Asked why she's free actors or actresses but left France for a movie career in America, Cotillard said, "I love this language. I love the universe of the cinema European countries with a hugely rich and diverse film industry." Filming with such as Ingrid Bergman and Emile Gaby remained in Hollywood because the industry was rich and diversified, she said.

No borders

"But take me and Marion [Cotillard] as examples as we both have very different careers. French cinema, where there is a heritage that is quite unique," said the actress, who is married to French actor and director Guillaume Canet. "I think France is one of the two countries in Europe where you can work [which is rich]. In film."

Juggling parts between interviews, and "baby-sitting" for Oscar for a spell, Cotillard said she planned to continue working in both countries.

"It's all a question of freedom" she said. "I have no borders and, frankly, Asian films are extraordinary. If I found [a script] [Zhang Yimou or Japanese] perhaps one day I could play an all-French woman in Chinese Japan." —AFP

ComicRelief

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES DRAKE

TODAY'S BORN TODAY People born on this day are extremely sensitive with others and can be very moody and unpredictable. They're very insecure and often need support and love. They make an impressionable entrance and are a leader or person who deals with the public. Work to build on your inner confidence, educate to you the next year. You will attain more than you dare dream.

Birthdate of: Andre Rieu(n), opera musician; actress Carol Kane(1952); Cuba Gooding Jr., actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a wonderful day to communicate and enjoy the company of others. Don't be afraid to express your opinions. Enjoy playful activities with children. Pay attention and be fun.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Home, health and domestic matters are your primary concern today. Discussions with a parent could be significant. Investing funds now is for gain and loss.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is a busy, exciting day for you. Talk to relatives and siblings. Your versatility is a great key for negotiations, attending and meeting new people. Avoid. It's easy to identify with your personal style. Play it cool, stay in shape.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Your focus is on business and community today. You might be engaging in meeting business deals. It's easy to identify with your personal style. Play it cool, stay in shape.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): The focus is on your ego today, which makes you a dynamic personality that could be overbearing. A short escape or little bit of extra grand luck on you. Yay!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Work alone or behind the scenes today. Keep a low profile. This is a good day for quiet research.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Love connecting with others. Your charm is at its peak. Socializing is favored. Discuss plans with a friend, in particular, could be significant. It's a good day to get creative.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Early today, some aspect of your private life could suddenly be made public. Critical remarks, secrets, rumors and UFO will make you be aware of this.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Because your sense of adventure is aroused, you want to do something different today! Avoid boredom if you're more than likely. Try to learn something new.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Step up to the plate with your usual talent regarding professional matters. Your finances are extraordinarily good. Just do it.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Because the focus is squarely on your inner being, you'll have to go within to find answers. Dealing with others. This is not a big day. Be friendly. Set aside time now, when you'll have to go over how to keep that up with you.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You want to get better organized today. Include information or ideas that relate to a project. Spending time with a friend, your friends are always big with make confidences or be a member. Don't take yourself for the basics.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. For more programs at www.sudoku.com

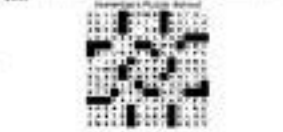
Answer to previous puzzle

1	4	7	9	2	3	5	6	8
5	9	2	7	6	8	3	4	1
6	3	8	4	1	5	7	9	2
2	6	4	1	9	7	8	3	5
3	1	5	8	4	6	2	7	9
8	7	9	3	5	2	6	1	4
9	2	1	5	3	4	7	8	6
4	5	3	6	7	9	1	2	8
7	8	6	2	8	1	9	5	3

Concepts Sudoku

			8		6			
	6						3	
		5		2		9		4
	6		1				9	5
		8		3			7	2
			9		3	5	6	
		3						4
				7		8		

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



PARTY! PARTY!

KATHNIELLE stars Cian Punzi, Wendy Valdes and Hilda Dalino were guests at the "New Moon"–inspired gathering of medical interns hosted by Pharex at the La Pavillon recently

A STORM Trooper action figure from "Star Wars"

A FULLY poseable X-Men mutant

PAOLO shares his dad's interest in collecting action figures.

"TOYS are meant to be opened and played with, not kept in a box," says the toy collector.

Paolo, the opposite of Gab

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Andrew Tablizo

BROTHERS PAOLO AND GAB Valenzuela admit that they are polar opposites in ... just about everything.

"I think the only thing we have in common is our family name," said Gab, the younger son of model-turned-actor Gary Valenzuela. "Even the type of gals we like are different. Seriously, he's a rocker, but he's not metrosexual. He's not into the whole showbiz thing. I'm the one more on TV a lot. I bet more on the stage."

Dude, front man of the rock band Salamin, said even their fashion preferences are different. "Gab is all flash, as in sheer his tatags. I'm more laid back. Yes more into the Lolas's aesthetic—bohemian look," Paolo told Living Stars in an interview at the family-owned Studio 9 in New Manila, Quezon City.

And while Gab is into collecting gadgets and "building his own recording studio, Dude is more about toys, an interest he inherited from Gary, who manufactures action figures professionally.

"I save money so I can buy toys. I don't mind if my electronics are not top-of-the-line. I'm OK with the normal iPod," Paolo explained. "I have 26 rotating Nikon they name to the house, they hang out in my room. I make sure I keep my most expensive toys on the top shelves."

Toys

I've been collecting action figures since I was 14. My dad, who was once featured in magazines with his Glock and Star Wars collections, got me into it. When he gave his toys to me, I took it collecting to the next level. Star Wars toys are really my favorite. My prized possession is my Storm Trooper action figure. I have the whole outfit. It took me a year to collect the whole thing. It's the authentic model.

I started collecting mineral action figures only a few years back (shows a fully poseable X-Men warrior). I became more interested in Transformers when the movie and it's sequel were released.

While I keep toys in mint condition, I really don't believe in keeping them boxed. For me, a toy is meant to be played with, enjoyed and displayed. I know a lot of people who keep tons of mint—one in play with and the other in a box. Any guesses why.

Books

I like reading graphic novels like "Watchmen" by Alan Moore, who also wrote "Batman: Killing the Joke." I also like reading Jeff Smith, writer of the comic book series "Bone."

Scent

I've been using Escada Sentiment for Men for six years now. I had this experience when I was in college—I went the scent one day and I had three girls in three different places tell me they liked how I smelled. When you're men in real life and you hear that, you'll never change colognes again.

Toys

My favorite Tekken (shows a red round-neck with the words "Game Addict" printed on it) is a gift from my best friend. I play video games a lot. If you look closely, it's print has different video game controllers. I really like plain T-shirts, the more worn out, the better. They're very comfortable. And

Footwear

I'm a fan of the Chuck Taylor. The one I'm wearing now (shows a black canvas low-cut pair). I've had since high school. It's about eight years old. When the original Chucks like this first came out, they cost only P600. I now have around 30 pairs in different designs. I like Adidas and Vans, too. But I really like the classic Chucks. I like it so much that, for formal parties, I wear a pair of black leather Chucks.

Sports gear

I'm into wakeboarding, but it's really an expensive sport, so I tried to get into something cheaper. Kobe Lucas Jereza-Dalupan convinced me to buy my long board. Also called skateboard. I've been into long boarding for six to eight months now. I've fallen a lot, too. Always wear a helmet. One time I fell and didn't have a helmet on, I got a bump on the forehead. It was really nothing, but the doctor told me to take a CT scan. It was a hassle. The CT scan cost P8,000. If I had a helmet on, with among guards.

E-mail: metro@inquirer.com.ph

REAL COUPLE

Off-camera romance continues to light up their eyes (from top left, clockwise): Leonardo DiCaprio and Bar Refaeli at the "Cinema for Peace" gala in Berlin; jailbirdsign and wife Susan, Prime Sergeant with wife Maggie Q; festival at Oscar nominees luncheon.